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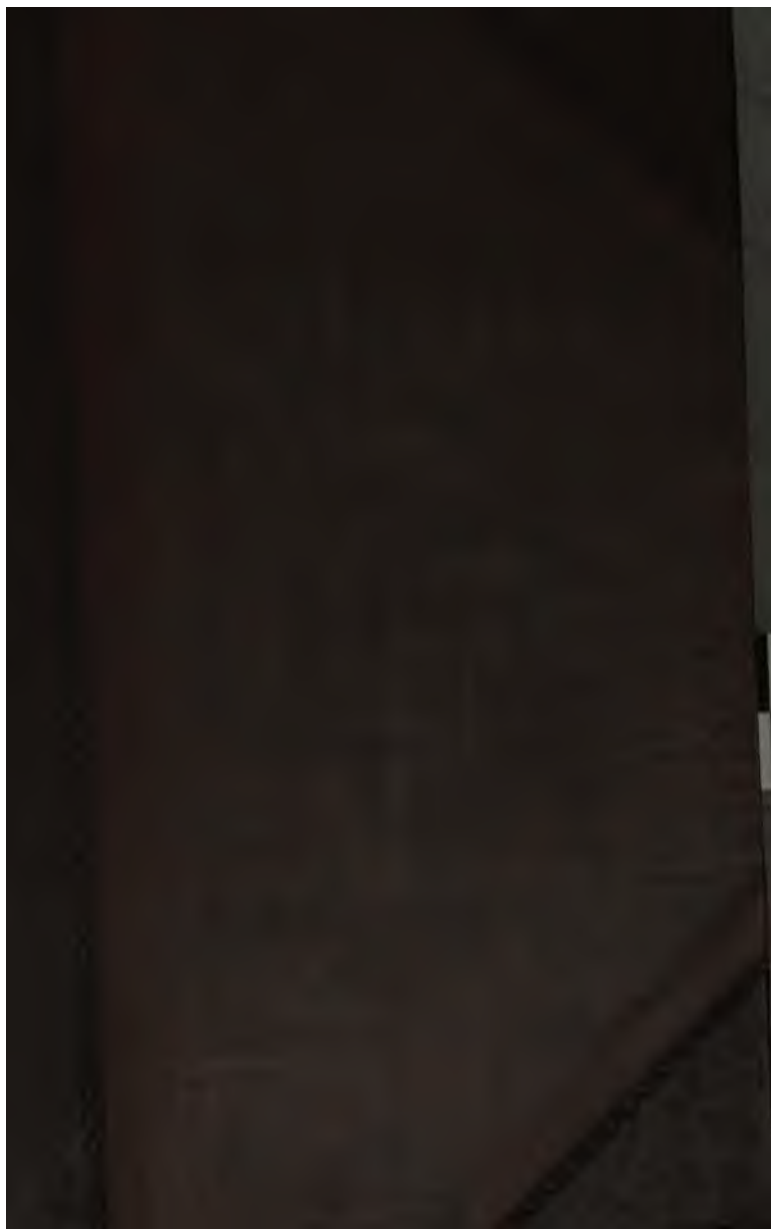
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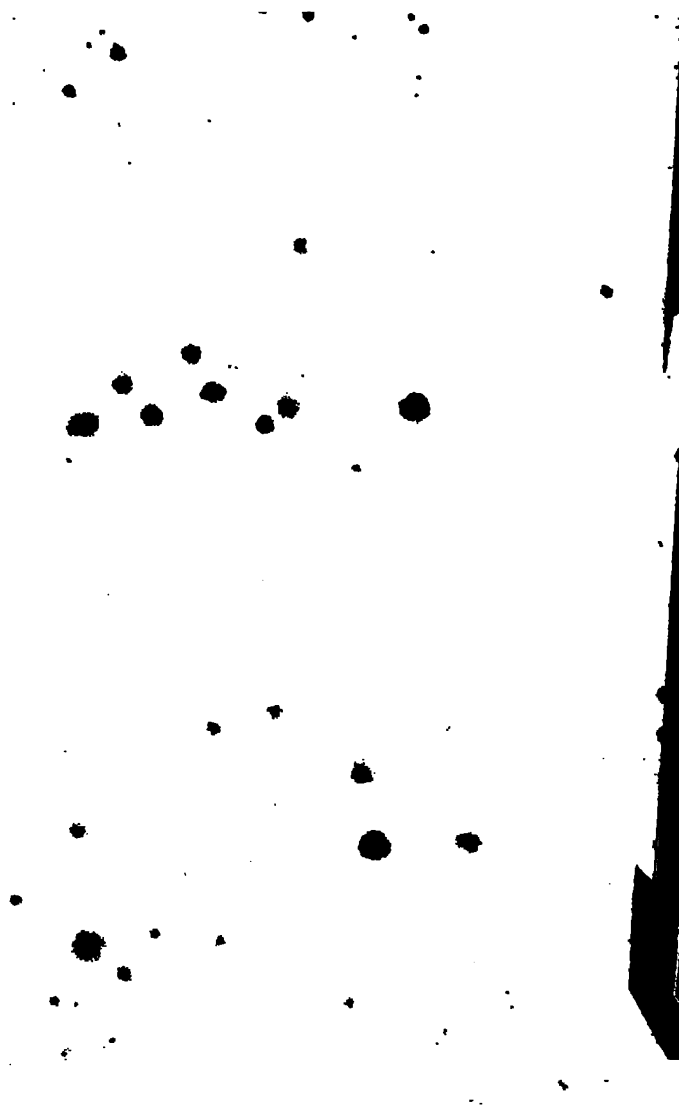
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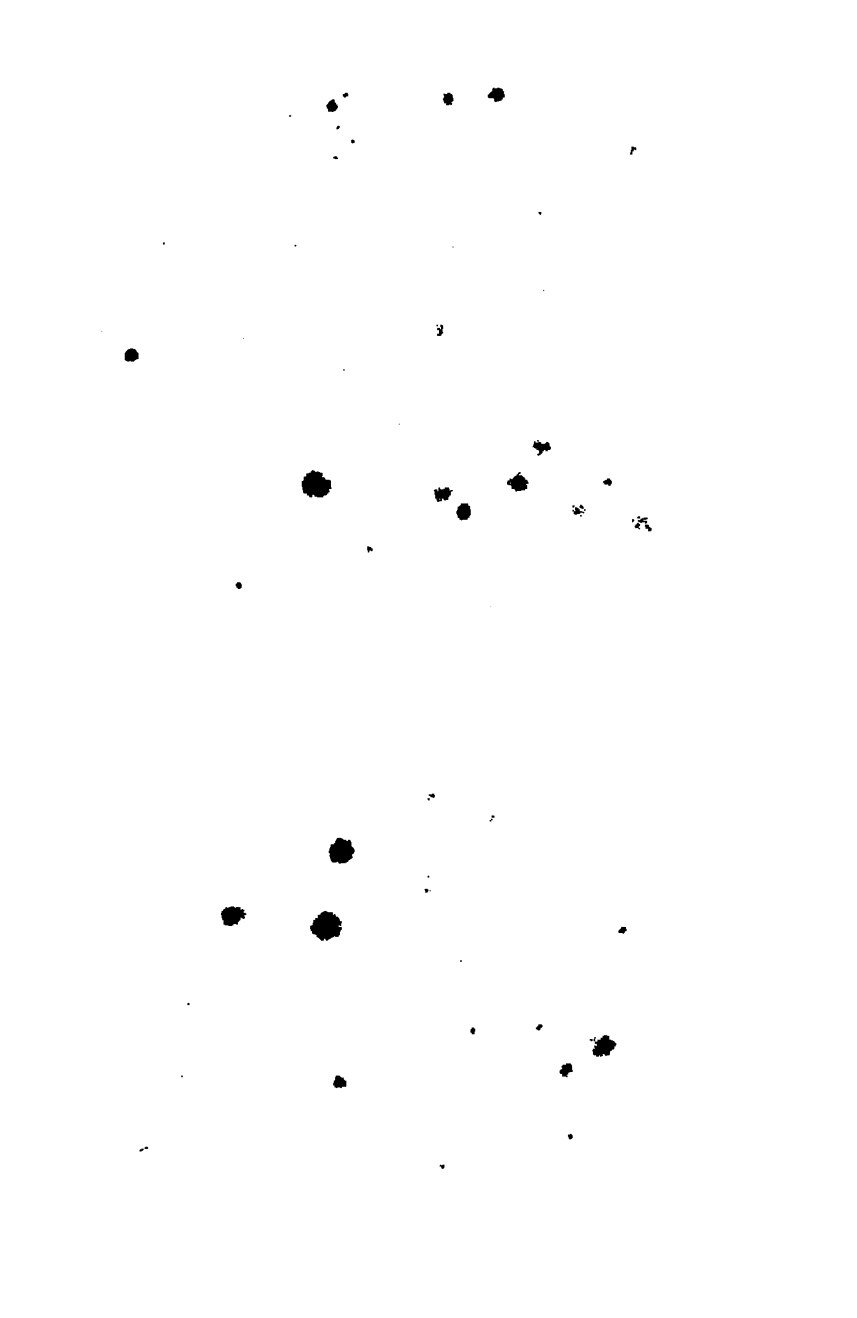
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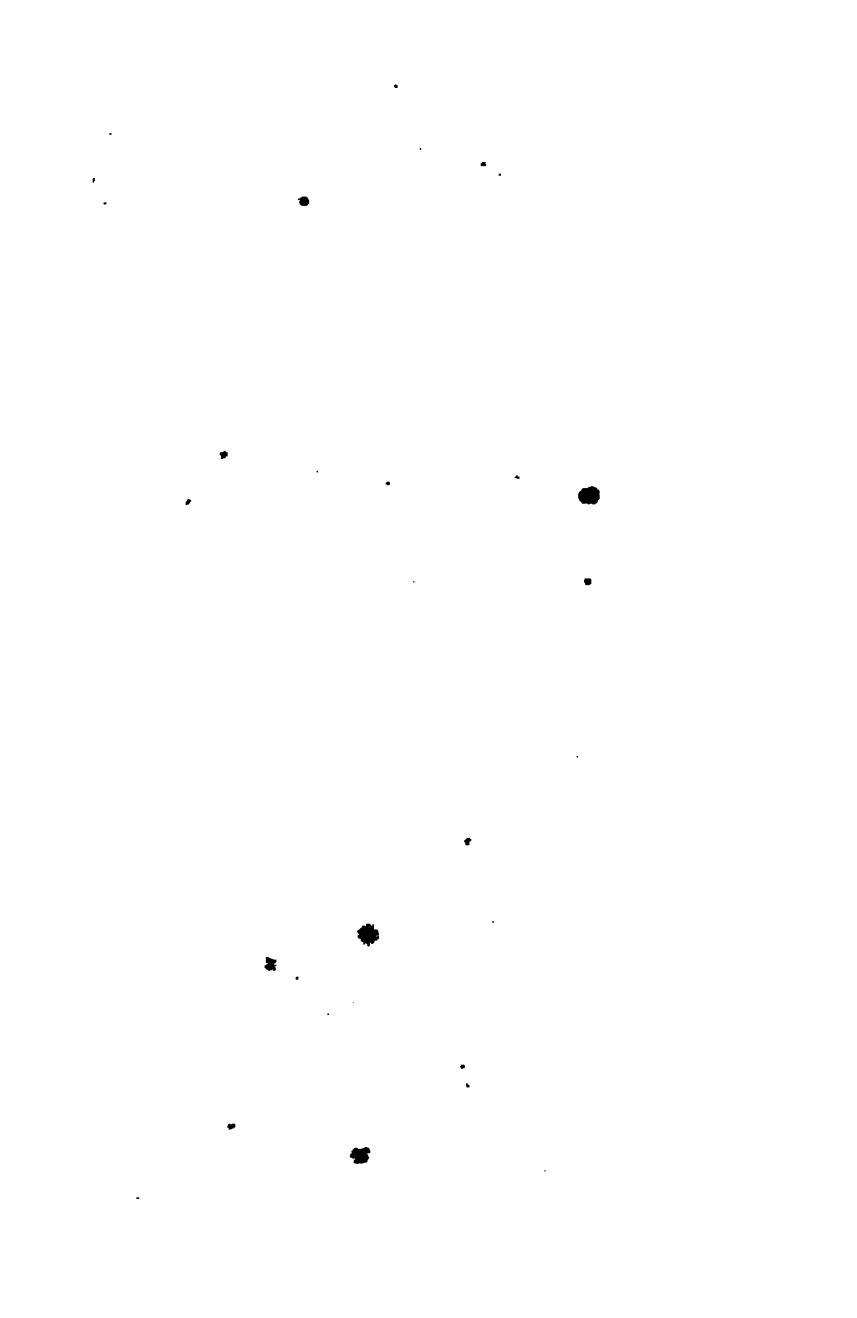
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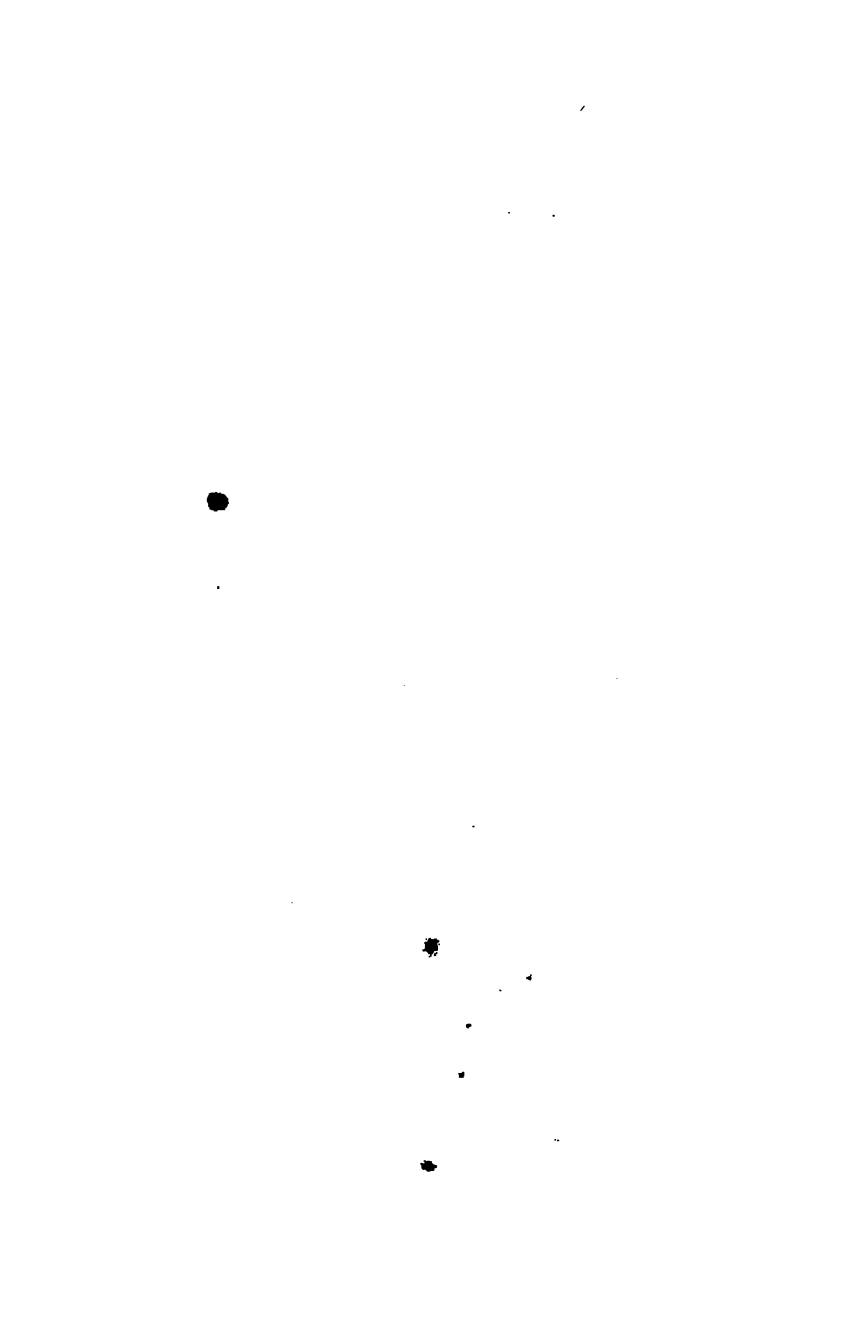












Parochial Tracts.

T R A C T S

FOR

P A R O C H I A L U S E.

BY CONTRIBUTORS

TO THE

"TRACTS FOR THE CHRISTIAN SEASONS."

V O L. V.

O X F O R D,

J O H N H E N R Y P A R K E R,

AND 377, STRAND, LONDON.

M D C C C L I I.

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TRACTS FOR FEMALE PENITENTS.

I.

THE following may be used by a penitent alone, or by a teacher with a penitent ; the portions which may be read by the teacher, are marked by inverted commas, the remainder may be used by the penitent alone, as directed by the teacher, or the teacher may repeat the words first, and the penitent follow repeating afterwards.

Read slowly.

“ **B**E turned immediately, O thou sinner, to thy Creator and thy Redeemer ; be not doubtful in thy mind, nor delay. This moment thou mayest hear. To-morrow it may be too late. Death is close to thee, though thou canst not see him. Behold two ways now lie before thee ; lo, Jesus stands by the strait gate : He is ready to open this strait gate to thee, even to thee, O miserable sinner. See, how He beckons to thee, how He looks at thee, how His eye is fixed on thee. Hark how He speaks, ‘ Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden.’ It is to thee He speaks. He invites thee to enter in. He tells thee it is the way to life ; the only way to

life. Do not now stop. Do not hesitate. Indeed, indeed, it has been by the unspeakable mercy and goodness of Christ, that you have been taken out of the broad way, down which you were hastening. Consider the end of the way you were then in. You can picture to yourself waking up suddenly in the night at the cry of fire, the screams of terror, the suffocating smoke, the cry for help; you rush to the door, it is barred; and then a voice is heard, a door unseen is opened, there is a hand held out; would you not lay hold of it? would you not fly? But you cannot picture to yourself the sleep of death; the sudden waking up in the everlasting burning of hell, where terror more dreadful than any you can conceive abides for ever and ever without help, without hope. The broad way you were travelling leads straight down into that terrible everlasting burning. Hark! the voice of Jesus is still calling to thee; ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden.’ His hand is stretched out to thee.”

The penitent will here pause, and trying to place herself in the presence of God, and to feel the Divine Presence, she will say,

MY God, my God, didst 'Thou see me in the way to this terrible place? Is it indeed Thy-

self that hast called me? Is it Thou my Saviour, that now sayest to me, "enter in at the strait gate?" Is it to me, a miserable abandoned sinner,—a despised outcast,—the object of the ridicule, and the scorn, and the loathing, even of my companions in sin; is it to me this gracious call is come? Should I indeed have gone down; and ah! should I have reached that dreadful place without help, without hope; if Thou hadst not called me thus? Hast Thou called me in the very midst of my vileness, to shew me the strait gate, that I may enter in? Can it indeed be?

"Yes! it is indeed the call of God you hear, 'Come out from among them; turn ye, turn ye, from the evil of your doings. Why will ye die?' It is a voice like no other voice that you hear, a voice of awe; as when God walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and called to Adam in his sin, 'Where art thou?' and Adam could not hide himself though he fled among the dark trees of the forest; yet it is a voice of love you hear, as when Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, 'Woman, why weepest thou?' It is indeed thy God. He has had mercy on sinners as great as thou art. He has mercy still: be not afraid, only believe."

Then let the penitent ponder in her heart and say ;

I do indeed hear the voice. I hear it calling to me, but all is dark before. I see with my eyes those around me who have taken me, and lodged me, and fed me, and sheltered me, and are very kind to me, though I deserved it not. They were once unknown to me, but now they seem all kindness to me, and I see all like a home, with its kind faces and kind words ; but I cannot see my God.

“No, thou canst not indeed see Him as He is, thou canst not hear Him as He really speaks, but thou canst hear Him, as thou hearest no earthly sound, in the depth of thy soul ; as if in a dream, in the silence of the night, thou didst hear a voice from another world. It is He indeed more surely than the voice that thou hearest in thine ears, and the face that thou seest, for what are we thy fellow-creatures ? we are sinners : but He loves as no one else can love. He says Himself, ‘ Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? yea she may forget, yet will not I forget thee !’ It is indeed His voice that now fills the depths of thy soul, and makes thee to pause, and marvel ; He it is who saith to thee ;

‘Turn then, turn even to Me, saith the Lord thy God.’ Again, I say unto thee, be not afraid, only believe.”

Then let the penitent try once more to place herself in the very presence of the great and merciful God, and lift up her heart in silence ; then let her kneel down and clasp her hands, and endeavour to pray to God in these words ;

O MOST merciful and gracious Lord God Almighty, behold I kneel before Thee ashamed and confounded ; I am overwhelmed by the thought of my sin, and the dreadful end of the way in which I have been walking : Thou, in exceeding mercy, hast called me to come out of it, and behold I am now fallen before Thee. Lighten mine eyes, O Lord, drive away the darkness of my heart, that I may behold Thee whose voice I have heard, and to whom alone I can look for the help I need. Thou alone canst open to me the gate that leads to everlasting life. I entreat Thee, O blessed Jesus, go Thou before me ; shew me the way in which Thou wouldst have me to walk. Are there any poor souls to “whom Thou hast sworn in Thy wrath, they should not enter into Thy rest?” never hear another sound of joy, a word of kindness? and hast Thou been so very mer-

ciful to me, as to stop me from madly rushing into this everlasting woe?

Have mercy upon me, O God, after Thy great goodness.

According to the multitude of Thy mercies, do away mine offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sins.

Turn Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my misdeeds.

My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death hath fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, a terrible dread hath overwhelmed me.

Turn Thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for I am desolate and in misery.

Lord hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto Thee.

Then let the penitent rise up, and raising her eyes toward heaven, let her say ;

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth.

TRACTS FOR FEMALE PENITENTS.

Then let her repeat to herself:—

LORD with this guilty heart of mine
To Thy dear cross I flee,
And to Thy grace my soul resign,
To be renew'd by Thee.

Plung'd in a gulph of darkest sin,
I wretched mourner lay ;
Without one cheerful beam within,
Or spark of glimm'ring day.

With pitying eyes, the Lord above,
Beheld my helpless grief ;
He saw, and Oh ! amazing love,
He came to my relief.

I heard a voice of sov'reign grace,
A more than mortal word,
Oh ! thou poor wand'ring sinner come,
And turn unto the Lord.

My soul obeys Thy gracious word,
Of Thee I ask relief ;
I would believe Thy promise, Lord :
Oh ! help mine unbelief.

*Then let the penitent kneel down, and the teacher kneeling
down with her, let her say,*

LORD, hear her prayer,
And let her cry come unto Thee.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of
the world, have mercy upon her.

Penitent say, Amen.

Wash her thoroughly from her wickedness, and cleanse her from her sin.

P. Amen.

Judge her not according to her sin, neither reward her according to her iniquity.

P. Amen.

Each verse to be said with a reverent space between: so that the penitent may think and pray; then add:

O JESUS Christ, the Blessed Son of God, our only Saviour, help this Thy sinful creature diligently to keep Thy holy word, and to take heed that no sinful thought displeasing to Thee may remain in her. Oh! may she be strengthened and settled in every good thought and resolution, through Thy power and love, O most gracious Jesu; may she seek to know Thee, and to love Thee; may her desire be to live to Thee, and to die to Thee!

OUR FATHER, which, &c.

THE Lord bless us and keep us; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us, and give us peace. *Amen.*

TRACTS FOR FEMALE PENITENTS.

II.

The End of our Being.

O SINNER, time is fast hastening away. Every hour is bringing thee nearer to the cold dark grave. How much hast thou to learn and to do before thou goest down into it! Perhaps this very hour thy winding-sheet is being spun: the bell about to toll for thee! Delay not then, who can tell thee that thou shalt live to-morrow? How many solemn questions are there which thou must consider, before thou goest hence and art no more seen!

Let the penitent pause for a few moments, and lift up her heart in secret prayer to heaven; and ask the merciful God not to cut her off suddenly, altogether unprepared as she is; but to give her a little time for thought upon the solemn concerns of her soul. Then let the following words be read.

IMAGINE yourself sitting all alone in a desert place. Imagine then, that you see coming forth out of nothing, all men from the foundation

of the world. See ! how quickly they pass ! they are passing on ; some on a broad way, some on a narrow way. See ! how quickly they disappear ! They are going through the gate of death, as through a curtain. Some are gone into a happy eternity : some to an eternity of darkness, tribulation and woe.

O sinner, this is thy own life. Thou didst come out of nothing by the great power of God. Thou art now passing. Thou wilt soon be beyond the veil, which is death.

God did indeed make thee, but not as thou now art : thou art fallen. He made thee to be "very good." He gave thee an understanding to know Him ; a heart to love Him ; a conscience to speak within thee, telling thee what is good, and what is evil. And He meant thee to be happy in serving and loving Him, thy Creator. He prepared for thee a happy eternity ; He made thee to be most happy.

And now, as thou art passing on thy way, His hand has never ceased to hold thee up ; He has guarded thee sleeping ; He has fed thee with abundant food ; He has clothed thee ; He hath preserved thee whilst many were in pain, and dying around thee ; thou art now alive only by the great power of God. And thy sin, ah ! thy

horrible sin has been, that, notwithstanding all this great mercy, thou hast not thought of Him, thy Creator, thy Preserver, thy Redeemer. Thou hast loved and served the basest things; the foulest passions: thou hast sold thyself, body and soul, to work evil: thou hast listened to the greatest enemies of thy soul, and followed them: thou hast given thyself to most shameful thoughts. And now, when good angels, who watch around us, though we see them not—when they look on thee, what must they think of thee, of thy shame, thy uncleanness, thy misery, thy ungratefulness to thy God, and their God! If the very dog which thou hast fed, which has followed thy steps, which has licked thy hands, which has looked up into thy face, and has lain at thy feet,—if the dumb brute could know what thou hast been to thy Master, thy more than Master, thy Creator, what would it think of thee! O thou fallen soul! into what dark alleys, what chambers of iniquity hast thou gone, and laid down, and loved to have it so! thou, a living soul, thou who wert made for God, and for the company of angels, and for heaven! And yet who ever bore with thee with such forbearance as God has done; who ever supplied thee with so many great blessings as He has supplied thee with, so

many years ? Thy mother loved thee tenderly, and nursed thee in thy infancy, and watched around thy cradle, feeding thee and gently soothing thee, when thou wert sick or in trouble ; but what mother has so done for thee, or could so do for thee, as thy God has done, and is doing, day after day, and year after year ?

Pause here again for a few moments, and try to raise your heart to God, and meditate for a while, saying to yourself these words :

MY God, my God, 'Thou, and 'Thou only indeed didst make me ; and I knew it not. My soul was dark within me. I breathed, and moved : I have been a living soul. I am marvellously and wonderfully made ; but I neither knew myself, nor Thee my Maker. My soul is covered with shame. Oh ! give me grace to know my misery, and what I am. Didst Thou indeed make me to be happy ? Can it be indeed that one so vile as I have been, and am, one so despised, so outcast, so ashamed to look on a fellow-creature in the light of day, I who left the company of the happy and the good, and could be seen only in the dark places where sinners herd together ; I whom my sisters and my former friends all shunned, can it be that I was made to

be happy in heaven, with God and all His holy angels? I know that I lost my home, my accustomed place where I was in childhood, where I innocently played, where I was neither afraid, nor ashamed, where my heart was light within me, and my step gay; I know that loss: I have mourned to think of it, many a long hour: but did I lose also a place of happiness in all eternity; did I lose a home, and kind faces, in heaven? O my God, if it be indeed so, how have I destroyed myself! how have I fallen! how low have I sunk! how great has been my ruin! And yet, I know, I did always feel within me something which spoke to me of happier days: I felt that I ought not to be what I was: as if I were made for something better than to be so vile, and to live for such base things as I then loved. Yes! even in the midst of all that dreadful sin, and in that company, when my laughter was loudest, when I tried to be most gay, there was a sadness within me, I felt something which seemed to call me away from that dark place. And when I was alone, it came over me, and I could not bear myself, and I tried to fly from it. Was it Thy voice, O God, within me, which told me of what I ought to be: and of what I was made for: and of that happy place where I might

be blessed with Thee? O my God, how my understanding has been darkened: how my heart has been hardened: how my conscience has been dead within me in trespasses and sins!

Here let the penitent again pause: and in secret prayer ask of God in great mercy to impress on her soul more and more these thoughts; and then let the following words be read slowly.

IT is indeed most true that the Almighty God brought thee out of nothing: formed all the members of thy body: all the faculties of thy soul: and gave thee the knowledge of Himself, and of His will. What thou didst feel within thee was indeed God's own voice; and He was then in those feelings saying to thee, "Turn thee, turn thee, even to Me." "Come out from among them and be ye separate." "Why will ye die?" He spoke to thee thus; even in the very midst of those dark haunts of wickedness, and that wild company, perhaps even amidst drunkenness and blasphemies. He did not altogether leave thee, nor forsake thee; for God had a desire to save thee, even then. "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God."

It is also most true that Almighty God formed

thee, O sinner, even thee to be most pure, and to live with angels bright and fair, in heaven. Look now around you. You see some who have never fallen as thou hast : and who now look on thee with kindness. They are of the very same nature as thyself ; they have their own infirmities ; they have known temptations, as thou hast : but they have not fallen as thou didst. Thou mightest have been like them : thou mightest have been as pure as they are, and as near to heaven : thou wert made to live as they have lived : and to die as they trust to die, and to go where they hope to go, into a blissful and glorious eternity ; and to stand before God, as they then hope to stand before Him, to praise and to bless Him in heaven for ever, where there will be no more pain, or sorrow, or crying. This is the true end of our being ; yea, even now, fallen as thou art, it may yet be thy end ; if thou wilt turn and repent, and cast thyself before God, and ask Him of His infinite pity, to cleanse all thy sin away, and to guide thee into the same blessed happy path, which leads to the same glorious end.

Remember, however, that it is not thy soul alone must become pure and clean ; but thy body also. Thy body was formed by the hand of God, as well as *thy* soul. Thy body is a

glorious vessel, in which the immortal spirit dwells : and both body and soul together make the one man. Thy soul cannot be clean, unless thy body be clean also ; nor can thy soul enter into its full glory in heaven, without thy body. They came out from God together : and together will they go back to Him. The body is given to serve the living and blessed God, as well as the soul. Both, body and soul, therefore, now so defiled, so abused, so covered with shame, must be cleansed, and renewed and glorified. This is thy appointed end ; and even this great and wonderful work may be done in thee. Oh ! yes, even thou, so deeply fallen, so helpless, may find again the blessed glow of health, and purity in thy body and thy soul together, as life comes into a new-born child : thy flesh shall come again, and a new spirit spring within thee.

But thy hope, thy one only hope is in Jesus Christ our blessed Lord, our life ; who gave His own sacred, saving blood to renew us, to cleanse body and soul. "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly ;" even for thee. Turn then in blessed humble hope ; and believe. "All things are possible to him that believeth." Pray, with thy whole heart and soul, pray.

TRACTS FOR FEMALE PENITENTS.

we try to place yourself in the presence of God: kneel down: clasp your hands together: be quite calm and still, and then make a very earnest prayer to God in such words as these:

ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, behold I kneel before Thee, ashamed and confounded; look on me in Thy great compassion, from heavenly dwelling-place. If it is indeed Thou that hast called me to leave my sin, and my sinful companions, to come unto Thee; have mercy on me most miserable sinner, full of shame and grief. Confess to Thee, O great and holy God, that I have abused all Thy mercies: I have wasted all Thy gifts: I have sold myself to abominable wickedness. I am defiled; I cannot with my pure eyes look up to Thee. Wilt Thou, O God, save such as I am? Wilt Thou indeed receive me, and receive me back, and give me a new heart and a new life. O God, have mercy upon me, and help me; for I have no hope but in Thee.

Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.
Let Thine ear consider well the voice of my complaint.

TRACTS FOR FEMALE PENITENTS.

O Blessed Jesu, grant her the gift of Thy holy love, pardon of all her sins, and grace to persevere unto the end.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

Have mercy upon her.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world;

Grant her Thy peace.

Lord, have mercy upon her.

Christ, have mercy upon her.

Lord, have mercy upon her.

OUR Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

THE Lord bless and keep us. The Lord make His face to shine upon us. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us, and give us peace, now and evermore. Amen. Amen.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

SEVEN MEDITATIONS
UPON THE
FE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
FOR THE
USE OF YOUNG PERSONS.

THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH, AND THE MEDITATION OF MY HEART,
ALWAYS ACCEPTABLE IN THY SIGHT, O LORD, MY STRENGTH
AND MY REDEEMER.

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- I.—ON THE INFANCY OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.
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INTRODUCTION.

THE following meditations are designed to draw out some of the sublime truths hidden in the great doctrine of the Incarnation—a doctrine which is, in reality, the key-stone of the Christian faith ; and which cannot be received in any full measure into the heart, without producing a wonderful effect upon the outward life. Their author will feel great reason to be thankful to Almighty God, if this little tract, the work of a few leisure hours, be so favoured by the Divine benediction, as to become the instrument through which the Holy Ghost may be pleased to withdraw even one young Christian from the vanities of this wicked world, and enable him to give himself to Christ, whose arms are ever open to receive those who come to Him ; who from His throne above is even now saying to every lamb and

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sheep of His fold, "My son, give Me thine heart."

If there are pleasures in the world, there are greater pleasures in religion; and among these, not the least is the peace and joy which religious meditation diffuses over the heart. David of old experienced this holy delight, and many humble Christians have learned by practice the sober truth of his inspired words: "I have had as great delight in the way of Thy testimonies as in all manner of riches." May those who use the following pages find the holy life of Jesus Christ to be indeed unto them ways of pleasantness, and all His paths to be peace.

A few practical hints must be added for the sake of those who have not yet formed the habit of meditation. Resolve to set apart a certain portion of each day for religious meditation. At the appointed time retire into your closet, or some private place, and then put yourself in the presence of God, and try to call in all vain thoughts. Then read slowly the meditation you have selected and endeavour to fix it in your mind by inwardly revolving each sentence, as you read. When it has been thus carefully perused, and in some measure fixed in the mind, kneel down and say the prayer appointed for each meditation, together

INTRODUCTION.

with the three collects at the end of this tract ; conclude with the Lord's Prayer, and "The grace of our Lord," &c.

One of the many evils of our age is the want of deep and collected thought upon the truths of the gospel. There is much restlessness, much talk and agitation, but not much sober reflection. Many run to and fro, following novelties, seeking some new thing ; few commune with their own hearts, and in their chambers, and are still. Will the reader join this little band of thoughtful Christians? Let him resolve to try his best, and let him be assured that one of the very first steps in that narrow path which leadeth unto life is to learn *to think*.

MEDITATIONS.

I.

ON THE INFANCY OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.

IMAGINE that you see before you a cradle, and a little infant sleeping in it, and its mother sitting by, watching her child.

1. Consider that this little Infant is the child of a most holy and pure Virgin, and that Almighty God is its Father. This holy Babe differs in many respects from other infants. All other children of men are conceived and born in sin. They come into this evil world as the heirs of wrath, stained with original sin, deriving from their parents the natural corruption of the human race. They require to be cleansed from this stain of sin, and to have their evil natures changed. But this holy and precious Infant is entirely free from the least spot of sin. He is pure in every respect. There is nothing wrong, nothing bad, nothing imperfect about Him. His tender flesh is most holy. Oh, words cannot tell

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how beautiful, how lovely, how heavenly, is this most sweet Child of the Virgin Mary. Look at Him with the eye of faith, and you will see stamped upon every feature and every limb, that He is in very deed the Son of God.

2. Consider, that this only perfect and only sinless Babe is not merely what He seems to be. In appearance He is a helpless infant; and nothing more. And yet is He not something more? Yes, He is God Almighty. This weak and speechless Babe, lying so quietly in His little cot, or resting so sweetly in His mother's arms, is God and man. He is the everlasting Son of the Father; "equal with the Father as touching His Godhead." He is the Maker of the world, the Word of God, who in the beginning said, "Let there be light, and there was light." "In the beginning was the Word: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." "And the Word was made Flesh." Amazing mystery! O my soul, bow down and adore Him who is both God and man in one Person. Worship this little Babe with a holy worship, and although He now seems speechless, helpless, unconscious, remember that He is thy God, thy Creator, thy Redeemer, and thy Judge.

3. Consider the wonderful humility of our

Lord Jesus Christ, who thus for your sake became not only a man, but even a frail infant, dependant upon others for care and support. Think in this how He deeply humbled Himself; and then say, can you ever after be proud, or high-minded? would you not wish to be clothed with humility, like your God and Saviour? Away with all the vanities of the world. Away with all high thoughts of myself; I will have no proud looks; I resolve with God's blessing to try and henceforth become really humble-minded, and I would rather kneel beside this precious Infant, my Blessed Saviour, in the stable at Bethlehem, than enjoy all the pleasures of sin in the haughty places of the earth.

Conclude with this Prayer.

O BLESSED Jesus, have mercy upon me, and as Thou, for our sakes, didst become a pure and innocent Babe, grant that I may lay aside all attachment to this wicked world, and may be really humble in heart and life, that I may finally be deemed worthy to behold Thee in Thy great glory; who livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

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MEDITATION II.

ON THE YOUTH OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR, AND IN PARTICULAR HIS SITTING AMONG THE DOCTORS IN THE TEMPLE.

PLACE yourself in imagination in the temple at Jerusalem, where the Jewish doctors are instructing children in the Law and the Prophets.

1. Consider who is present amongst those children. Every eye is attracted by the child Jesus, now twelve years of age, who takes His place with the other youths of His nation to be instructed along with them in the holy law of God. Although apparently only the carpenter's son, all are struck with amazement at this wonderful Child. His countenance, His voice, His words, point out His supernatural origin; He attracts the attention and excites the surprise of the bystanders, not by the smartness of His answers, or by mere cleverness, or by forwardness, but by His humility, His quietness, and by the deep wisdom shewn both in His questions and answers. "And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and His answers."

2. Consider why it was that He thus took His seat *with the other Jewish children*. Did

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He need to be instructed? Hear what He Himself says: "I have more understanding than My teachers: for Thy testimonies are My study. I am wiser than the aged because I keep Thy commandments." Was He ignorant? How could He be ignorant, who was in the beginning with God, and who was God; "who needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man?" He could have taught the doctors far more than they could ever otherwise learn: yet being a little child He sat amongst little children, that in all points He might be like unto us, and that He might leave us an example of simplicity and humility. O my soul, behold thy God as a young child receiving public instruction from His own creatures! What un-earthly, unworldly conduct! Surely I ought to be very humble, ever ready to take the lowest room, ever willing to receive instruction not only from my elders, but even from those whom I may think my inferiors, if I would walk in the most blessed steps of this very and eternal Son of God.

3. And once more, consider how this holy Child advanced towards man's estate. He went down with His parents to Nazareth, "and was *subject* unto them: and Jesus increased in wis-

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dom and stature, and in favour with God and man." O most blessed life of the youth of Jesus! How pure, how innocent, how holy were all His thoughts, words, and works. No sin ever sullied His immaculate nature; no cloud of anger or passion ever ruffled His brow; no sorrow, caused by sin, ever disturbed the tranquil happiness of His early life. All His days were passed in quiet and in peace, in obedience to His earthly parents, in prayer, and ineffable intercourse with His Almighty Father. If ever there was a happy home on earth, it was the home of Jesus, and Mary, and Joseph. Surely this was none other than the house of God, this was the gate of heaven! Yet the world knew not that this gate was opened, and that God indeed did dwell on the earth.

O LORD God, lift up my heart above this vain world, and make me to love Thee, and Jesus Christ Thy Son. May my youth, like His, be free from sin, my heart from malice, my mind from pride and ignorance, that so, by Thy grace, continually increasing in wisdom and in holiness, I may at last be admitted into the eternal home of Thine elect, through the merits of the same Thy Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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MEDITATION III.

ON THE PREPARATION FOR HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY.

1. CONSIDER the great work which our blessed Lord was about to perform upon earth. It was to lay the foundation of the mighty kingdom of God, to gather souls into it, to rescue men from the bondage of Satan, and to purchase their redemption, by the free shedding of His own blood.

2. Consider how difficult and how awful a work this was; how awful, to take a most pure, sinless, human nature, that He might offer it up as an atonement for all sin, past, present, and to come; how difficult it has ever been to persuade men to obey the truth, and to consult for the real welfare of their souls. Alas! we see every day, that there is nothing men think less of, nothing they care less for, than the salvation of their souls!

3. Consider that our Lord knew well the awfulness and the vastness of the work He had come to do; and therefore He waited thirty years before He entered upon it. How did He wait? Did He waste all those precious years in

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idleness? Did He mix Himself up in the vanities of the world, or involve Himself with its cares? Oh no! He lived long in retirement, practising obedience, given to prayer and communion with God. When the appointed time drew near, He entered into the solitude of the desert, and was there tempted by the devil, after a fast of forty days. Thus it was that He armed Himself for His contest with the world, not with earthly weapons, but with the benefits drawn from holy retirement, with the patience and endurance gained from a supernatural fast, and with the powerful strength reaped from a triumphant victory over the assaults of Satan. Learn, thence, O my soul, that if thou wouldest do any great work for the love of thy God, thou must withdraw thyself from the vanities of the world; thou must deny thy carnal appetites, thou must fast and pray, and by God's grace stand firm in the time of temptation. Thus only wilt thou be able to live to God's glory, and to advance His kingdom, either in thine own heart, or by the conversion of thy friends and neighbours.

O BLESSED Saviour, mercifully excite in me
a great concern for the welfare of my soul:
enable me to *work out* my own salvation with

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fear and trembling : teach me by Thy example to endure temptation ; give me grace constantly to meditate upon Thy holy life, and evermore to pray to Thee, who livest and reignest, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen.

MEDITATION IV.

ON THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

1. CONSIDER that our Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. He was the wise and good Physician, of whom they that were sick stood in need. He came to call sinners to repentance. He was the good Shepherd, who was seeking His lost sheep ; and how great was His joy whenever He found a missing lamb of His flock ! How gladly did He place it on His shoulders, or carry it in His arms. His love for the souls of men has ever been, it now is, most intense. He has loved us with an everlasting love. He has so loved us, as not even to spare His own life, in order that through His sufferings and death we might be saved. O my soul, adore, *and* honour, and love this divine Preacher of

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repentance, this holy Friend of sinners, this good Pastor of a wandering and erring flock. I will awake and shake off all sinful habits; I will arise and return with contrition of heart unto Him who is the Shepherd and Bishop of my soul. O Lord Jesus, receive me and have mercy upon me; Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.

2. Consider, what encouragement you have to draw nigh unto Jesus, and to seek from Him remission of sins. For when He exercised His public ministry upon earth, nothing could exceed—nothing could equal—His tenderness for sinners, and for all the people. When He saw the multitudes pressing after Him, He had compassion on them, as being like sheep without a shepherd. When they were hungry He fed their bodies with miraculous food, and their souls with high and holy doctrines. The sick He healed with a word or a touch; the lepers He cleansed; the dead He raised; the devils He expelled; the humble He favoured; the timid He encouraged; the weeping sinner, such as Mary Magdalene, He addressed with His sweetest assurances of love and mercy: “Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loveth much;” the only *persons* He repelled were the

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proud, self-reliant pharisees, or impenitent worldlings like Herod, or cold-hearted sceptics like Pilate. If you are none of these, fear not that the Lord Jesus Christ will turn away from you, if indeed you only seek Him earnestly with your whole heart.

Conclude by resolving to receive with meekness the engrafted word of divine Truth, which the Lord still speaks to you through His holy Catholic Church. Come to Him as the sick in the Gospel, having faith to be healed; sit at His feet like Mary, Martha's sister, and listen to His gracious teaching; ponder His words in your heart, like the holy mother of our Lord; and pray that you may not resemble the carnal people of Israel, who followed Him, not because of His divine instructions, but that they might witness some miracles, or receive some carnal gift.

ALMIGHTY God, in whose sight are the secrets of every heart, grant me grace to receive with meekness the teaching of Thy holy Church, and so earnestly to desire my own salvation, that I may labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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MEDITATION V.

ON THE MOST BITTER PASSION AND DEATH OF OUR
BLESSED SAVIOUR.

1. CONSIDER what answer you can give to the solemn question of the prophet, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength?" Of whom does the prophet say this, of himself, or of some other man?

2. Look into the garden at Gethsemane, then into the hall of judgment, thence to the mount of Calvary, and say, who indeed is this whose "garments" are "dyed" with blood, and, "who" "in the greatness of His strength" is treading the wine-press of the wrath of God? Behold the man! Lo, He prayeth alone in the garden, He is in an agony, His sweat is as it were great drops of blood, He prayeth, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." And an angel from heaven is sent to strengthen Him. It is the will of God that He should drink that bitter cup. O intense prayer, offered with the utmost earnestness! O awful will of God, which

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deems it right that this man should drink the bitter cup of shame and sufferings !

The hour is come, and the cup begins to overflow. This Son of Man, rising from His agonizing prayer, is seized by the soldiers, bound with thongs, and led to the hall of judgment ; there He stands before a wicked judge, and things that He knew not are laid to His charge. Like a common malefactor He is tied to a pillar, and His back is beaten with scourges ; “ the ploughers ploughed upon My back, and made long furrows ; ” “ I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.” O holy and uncomplaining sufferer, who art Thou that thus bearest so meekly such cruel wrongs ? These wicked men plait a crown of thorns and put it upon Thy head ; the thorns press upon Thy forehead, and the blood streams down Thy cheeks ; Thou standest alone in that cold, dark, hall ! Thy back is swollen with heavy bruises ; Thy head aches with pain ; Thy brows are red with blood ; yet far from having pity upon Thee, Thy foes lay upon Thee a heavy cross, which Thou bearest a little space until Thou faintest under it ; then they drag Thee along, weak and feeble, unto the mount of Calvary. Behold ! how they crucify this Son of Man ; they pierce His hands and

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His feet, His hands are stretched out upon the cross as if He were desirous to embrace all the world in the arms of mercy, those feet, which were "beautiful to preach the Gospel of peace," are pierced and wounded with a sharp nail; and most acute pains shoot through every nerve and sinew of His body. In the midst of His sufferings He prayeth for His murderers, "Father, forgive them;" He promiseth life to the dying sinner beside Him, and then He freely gives up His own life into the hands of God, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit;" thus He dies, and a soldier forthwith wounds His side, and there flow forth from that precious wound two most holy Sacraments of water and of blood. O "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," who art Thou that art thus "full of heaviness," and whose silent, patient agony appealest to all the unfeeling bystanders, and is such as might call forth tears, even from the most hardened? "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow, which is done unto Me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger."

3. Consider that this innocent, mysterious sufferer is not Moses, or one of the prophets, nor is

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He any mere child of man. In very truth He is man, partaker of our flesh and blood, the true representative of our human nature ; He is man, and He is God, the two in one Person ; so that He whom you see before you, hanging upon the cross, wounded, bruised, writhing in pain, fainting, dying, pale, cold, stiff after death, is none other than the very and eternal God ; the same who for thee was clothed with an infant's swaddling clothes ; who for thee did fast, pray, teach, work miracles, and who now beareth thy sins upon the accursed tree, and dies for thee that thou mayest live for ever. Oh ! fall down and adore this thy God ; confess those sins which have so often crucified Him afresh ; hide them in His blessed, saving wounds, and wash them in His precious blood !

O Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world,

Have pity upon me.

O Christ, our Sacrifice,

Have mercy upon me.

By Thine agony and bloody sweat,

Have mercy upon me.

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By Thy cross and passion,
Have mercy upon me.

By Thy five most sacred wounds,
Have mercy upon me.

By Thy precious death,
Have mercy upon me.

And hide in Thy grave all my wicked, grievous sins. Wash me, O Lord, and I shall be clean; only speak the word, and Thy servant shall be made whole. Amen.

MEDITATION VI.

ON THE RESURRECTION OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.

1. CONSIDER how strange it was that the Jewish rulers should desire that the sepulchre of our blessed Saviour should be made secure with a seal, and be guarded by soldiers. Was such a thing ever known or heard of before? Did soldiers ever before keep watch over the dead, pacing up and down before their tombs with solemn step? Surely this was a confession on the part of the Jews that they were afraid of Him who lay in the sepulchre, cold and lifeless; they were afraid of Him even in death; they re-

membered His own words, "He shall rise again the third day," and they wished, if possible, to prevent this promise from being fulfilled. But how vain it is in man to think of striving with God! Behold these brave soldiers shake with terror, and become as dead men; for the angel descends from heaven in the early morning, and rolls away the stone from the door of the sepulchre; and the Lord of men and angels awakes from the dead, and rises to die no more! "The Lord is risen indeed;" "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

2. Consider that our blessed Lord rose from the dead in the very same body in which He suffered on the cross; in that risen body are the five sacred wounds, the five indelible marks of His own ineffable love, and of man's awful cruelty; thus rising in His natural body, He has become "the first-fruits of them that sleep;" and by His own resurrection assures us that we also shall truly rise from the grave in our real, substantial bodies. How wonderful! I shall one day die and be buried, and my body shall return to the dust; and then, at the end of all things, God shall collect again this scattered dust, and give it life, and my soul being united to the same body with which it was joined here

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upon earth, I shall stand at the last day before the Lord my Judge. O blessed resurrection, if it be to eternal life! O dreadful re-union of soul and body, if it be to eternal damnation!

3. Consider the interest which we Christians have in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because He rose, we, as being members of His body, shall rise also. His resurrection is not only the pledge, but the cause of ours: "Christ the first-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's." Again, "He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification." His resurrection is the source of our justification. And once more; we are buried with Him in Baptism, wherein also we are risen together with Him, through the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead; we die with Him in Baptism unto sin, and we rise again with Him unto newness of life. May I realize this happy resurrection even in this world, and become in very truth "a new creature!"

GRANT, O Lord, I beseech Thee, that as I have been baptized into the death of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying my corrupt affections I may be buried with Him; and that through the grave and gate of death I may pass to my joyful resurrection,

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for His merits who died and rose again for me,
Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MEDITATION VII.

ON THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

1. CONSIDER first the facts concerning our Lord's ascension. Forty days after His resurrection He led His eleven Apostles out as far as to Bethany; there he lifted up His hands and blessed them, and while He blessed them He was parted from them, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. He went up into heaven in that very same body which was born of the Virgin Mary, which was nailed to the cross, which lay in the grave, and which rose again on the third day. In this body He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and in this same glorified body will He come at the last day to judge the quick and the dead. How exalted a dignity has our blessed Lord conferred upon our human nature, both by taking it upon Himself, and by seating it on the highest throne in the whole universe! "Lord, what is man that Thou art

indful of him?" "Thou crownest him with glory and honour."

2. Consider the joy that was in heaven when the seed of the woman sat down on the throne of the Almighty. With what hallelujahs, with what shouts of joy did the heavenly courts resound! O how beautifully, how sweetly, and how gladly did the holy angels upon that day sing, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye fit up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in! Who is the King of glory? it is the Lord strong and mighty: it is the Lord mighty in battle!" "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive riches, and honour and blessing." If those holy beings are capable of any increase of happiness, they were, without doubt, made more happy on that day, when the Man Christ Jesus ascended into the heavens!

3. Consider that as Jesus Christ ascended bodily into heaven, so we should ascend mentally and spiritually. We should feel that He our treasure is there, and where our treasure is, there will our hearts be also. But how shall we ascend spiritually into heaven, except by leading spiritual life upon earth, by cherishing holy affections, and by withdrawing our hearts from all we for the sins and follies of the world! What

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saith the Scripture? “Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall rise up in His holy place? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart; and hath not lifted up his mind unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbour. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, a righteousness from the God of his salvation. Resolve then, O my soul, so to live here upon earth, that thou mayest be always spiritually present with thy gracious Saviour above; mortify all thy vices, nurture carefully every holy grace, especially cherish and improve the divine gift of faith, that precious faith, which, being “the evidence of things not seen,” will enable thee to penetrate the clouds, and mists, and darkness of this world, and to see those glorious realms of eternity where the Son of Man sitteth on the right hand of the Father.

GRANT, O God, I beseech Thee, that in heart and mind I may ascend into Heaven with Thy Son Jesus Christ, and ever dwell in His sacred presence, through the same our Lord Amen.

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PRAYERS TO BE USED AT THE END OF EACH MEDITATION.

I.

O ALMIGHTY God, whom truly to know is everlasting life : grant us perfectly to know Thy Son Jesus Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life ; that, following the steps of Thy faithful children, we may stedfastly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life, through the same Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

II.

O GOD, who art the hope of all the ends of the earth, mercifully grant that we may obtain the fulfilment of our hope, and after this life may behold Thee in 'Thine eternal glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

III.

O GOD, who art love, grant that we, loving Thee above all things, may obtain Thy heavenly promises, which exceed all that we can desire, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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And now, my friend, I leave these pages in your hands, humbly hoping that they may by God's grace be of some help to you in your Christian pilgrimage for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

WHERE WERE YOU LAST SUNDAY?

THE weather one Sunday was of a middling sort; there was no bright sunshine, but there was no rain; the roads were not dusty, but they were not wet; the wind was not soft or warm, but it was not bleak or keen. In short it was, as I said, a middling kind of day, nothing in the weather to tempt people out of doors, nothing to keep them in.

But it was Sunday, the Lord's day, the day for Church. There was this to draw people from their houses, while there were neither heavy rains, nor cutting winds, nor any thing in the weather to keep even the weakly and delicate in the house.

Mr. Clifden the rector expected therefore to see a well-filled Church, and after teaching in the Sunday School he walked gladly to the House of Prayer, longing to join with his flock in the holy and blessed task of prayer and praise. Alas! alas! the rector saw many a vacant seat

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that day; many had failed to come to the House of God; there were many gaps throughout the seats; and there was the disheartening sight of a half-filled Church. Mr. Clifden was greatly disappointed, greatly saddened at the thin scanty congregation. "Is this all," he thought within himself, "who in this place love their Lord, delight to seek His Presence, and have care for the salvation of their souls?" He felt that many of his people were sinning grievously that very hour in turning their backs on God, in refusing to draw near to Him in His holy House. However, these sad thoughts of his people's sin only made the good pastor to pray more earnestly; yes, he only prayed the more, that God might turn the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.

But now let us see what these people were about whose seats were empty in the House of God. As the bells began to ring, John Hicks and his wife were just tumbling out of bed, while their children were crying for their breakfast down stairs. By the time they were both dressed, and breakfast was got ready, and the children's bread and butter was all cut, the bells stopped; and thus when the congregation were *on their knees* humbling themselves before God,

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the Hicks's with their children were eating and drinking as if there were no Church. In short, John Hicks and his wife loved their bed more than God, and liked "a good lay" better than the worship of their Lord.

In another house James Hobson was sitting by his fire, he had borrowed a newspaper and was busy reading a long account of some daring robberies when the bells struck up. "Come, come," said his wife, "it's time to be off to Church, and you ar'nt dressed yet; make haste, James, or else you'll be late."

"I must finish this robbery first," said James, "there's lots of time." "Indeed there isn't, James, do run for your coat, there's a man." However James went reading on, and his wife soon came down with her shawl and bonnet on. "O there you are, James, with that horrid newspaper, I declare the last bell is going; I must be off; but do, James, make haste and follow me."

She hurried out of the house, but the robbery was not finished till the bell stopped; and therefore as James had not yet got his Sunday clothes on, he gave up all thought of Church, and again taking up his paper began the account of a dreadful murder *that made his blood run*

cold. Thus James loved his newspaper more than God.

At the same hour Harry Larkins lifted up the latch of his door and took his seat in the old arm-chair. His thick shoes were covered with dirt, and he was evidently tired. "Where have you been, Harry?" asked his wife, who was just putting the Sunday dinner into the pot, "I thought you were in Church."

"No," grumbled Harry, "I went out up to see Jem Derby's cow, and we've been haggling there this hour, and it's no use, he asks a pound too much for it, and I won't give it."

"That's right, Harry, don't you be taken in by that 'ere fellow; with five children we can't be throwing pounds into the ditch. It's too late for Church now; well, we poor wives with large families! it's hard enough to get dinners for the children, there's little time for Church." Did not Harry Larkins think more about his cow than about his God? and did not his wife think more about her family and her dinner?

Farther on, young Giles Hodgson was just getting his best coat with its bright buttons out of his box when there was a tap at the door, and there he found Bob Langdon, and Charlie Watkins, with two or three rough dogs. "Come

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along, Giles," said Bob, "we're going out into the woods to have some fun."

"Into the woods?" said Giles, "I'm going to Church."

"No," said Charlie, "you don't mean you're going to Church. Don't mind the parson; you'll not be found out; we shall be back before Church is over; come and have a lark just this once."

"No, Charlie, I shan't; I'm going to Church."

"Why, Giles," said Bob, "you are a pretty milksop; the parson has you in leading-strings."

Giles somewhat fired up at being thought to be in leading-strings. "None of your nonsense; I'm not a child."

"Well then prove it, and come along with us. Why you're afraid of the parson."

"No, I'm not."

"Why you daren't stir a step unless he lets you; I'd be my own master."

"So I am," answered Giles.

Both the youths looked at each other and winked in a jeering derisive way, and one began to whistle a tune and the other muttered to himself, "a pretty master he is!"

"Well," said Giles somewhat ashamed of the good side, "wait a minute and I'll change my coat."

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"Come," said Bob, "I like to see a little spirit in a man. I wouldn't be driven like cattle, that I wouldn't."

Giles now came down, and, with unwilling steps, half tempted to draw back, yet afraid of his companions' jeers, went off to hunt rabbits in the woods. And did not Giles fear the laugh, the scoff, the taunts of foolish evil men, more than the will of his Lord and God?

In another house Will Parry was sitting dosing by the fire with a bad head-ache. The truth is he had been spending wages on Saturday night at the beer-shop, and was now sick and ill from over-much drink. Did he not love his drink more than God?

Then there was Jane Harris who kept the bustling thriving shop, and had been letting a few people have some things on Sunday morning rather than lose gain; this made her bring her ledger down, and then she went looking over her accounts till it was too late for Church. Did she not love money more than God?

Thus I might go on; but this is enough to shew what cause the rector had for sorrow; yes, and there was One above who was sorrowing all the while over these false and faithless ones; *One* who had sent His only-begotten Son to

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save men from their sins, whose blood was trodden under foot, whose tender love was despised by these lovers of gain, and sloth, and drink, and pleasure.

And now, my friend, let me turn round to you and ask you, Where were *you* last Sunday? Were you in Church? Were you in your place in the House of God? Were you among the worshippers of your Lord? Or were you dawdling away your time, wasting it, profaning it, forgetting God, forgetting even your own soul? Tell me this. Alas, were you not among the breakers, the despisers of the Lord's day and of the service of the Lord? Were you not following your pleasure, or yielding to sloth, or looking over your goods, or dosing by your fire, or walking over the fields, when you should have been confessing your sins, seeking forgiveness, bowing both flesh and spirit at the throne of grace, and craving, in the Name of your Redeemer, deliverance from death and hell?

Tell me, I say, where you were, what you did, what you were about. If you dislike to give an answer, let me remind you that all is known; every thought, every word, every deed, every step was traced. Last Sunday is not gone; you cannot *bundle it away* and cast it off,

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and say it is a "by-gone;" it is not gone; it will come back; it will wheel round and meet you again face to face; it will witness against you; for all your days you have to be judged, but especially for those which are especially due to God, which He gave you for your soul's work, for especial acts of worship, for especial prayer. Your Sundays are not common days; woe be to you, if you spend them as common days; woe be to you hereafter, if you fool and fritter them away, if you spend them carelessly and shun God's presence and God's House, if you withdraw yourself from the power of the Spirit, if you turn away from Christ, if you refuse His love, His care, His mercy, His grace, His word of life.

Hence, I say, ask yourself, "Where were you last Sunday?" How will you give answer before the throne of God? Would you like to say, or dare to say, before the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, your Lord Jesus Christ, "I slept and did not pray; or I took my pleasure and did not pray; or I looked over my goods and farm and did not pray; or I idled and did not pray; or I went with the wicked and foolish and did not pray." How will such an answer sound on the day of judgment?

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

SWEAR NOT AT ALL.

It is said by God in Holy Scripture that for every idle word men shall give account in the day of judgment. Every idle word, think of that! What then will be said of oaths? If idle words, vain foolish words, will be condemned by our Judge, the Lord Jesus Christ, what fearful heavy condemnation will fall on those who have done worse than talk foolishly, on those who have let oaths come forth from their mouths, who have been wont to swear and to take God's Name in vain? Very heavily will the wrath of God fall on the swearer at the last great day. God Himself warns us of this; He tells us beforehand in plain strong words, that He will judge us severely and severely punish us for our oaths. We are all forewarned. No man who swears, no man who gives vent to oaths, can say, "I did not know that I provoked the Lord to wrath." We all know that He utterly hates oaths, that He abhors them, that He commands us not to utter them, that He will take vengeance, *that He will punish all swearers.*

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And yet are not oaths uttered every day? Men swear when they are angry; they swear in their common talk; they swear at their horses; they swear at their companions; they swear in the fields, in the streets, in jest and in earnest. O what thousands of oaths and blasphemous words ascend up every day to the ears of God! What thousands of oaths pollute men's mouths and put men's souls in peril and provoke the Lord who looketh down upon the children of men! Men make no more of swearing than of walking; one would think that they had been commanded to swear, that it was a proper thing to do, that there was no sin in it. Many seem hardly to know when they swear; it has become quite natural to them, and not a day passes without some light use of God's most holy, most awful Name. To find a single day in all the year without an oath would be a hard matter in this or any parish. We may see mere boys beginning to take God's Name in vain, as though it were a fine and manly thing to do. No wonder when they hear their fathers and their elders swear so much: the sin goes down from the father to the son, and the son catches up and copies the father's evil and guilty ways.

And yet, I ask you, Is there not a God that

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lgeth the earth? Will all the oaths go for nothing, and have no punishment when we are judged? Will men be able to swear all their oaths and call on God in a light reckless way and suffer nothing for this sin hereafter? O how terrible, how terrible will be the punishment! When the swearer stands before the judgment-seat of God, how he will wish and long and yearn to recall every vain oath, every light use of God's holy Name! How he will wish to unsay what he has said! How he will wish that he had been dumb! For by his tongue he will be condemned; his tongue ill used in former days will bring down vengeance; torment will come upon him, and he will exclaim in the bitterness of his soul, "How could I have ever thought so little of that fearful sin of swearing? What agony has brought upon me, and yet I thought little of it when I was in the world?"

And now let me ask you plainly, "Do *you* swear? Have *you* been in the habit of using the Name of God in your common talk?" If so, I implore you to curb your tongue; break off this guilty habit that will bring anguish to your soul by and by. Repent at once of all the oaths that you have mixed with your common talk, repent deeply of *all those sinful words that are*

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written down in the book of God. Do you think God does not mean what He says? Do you think that swearing is a mere trifle of a sin, that because "you mean nothing by it," as you say, God thinks little or nothing of it? Do you think that when God has said He will "not hold him guiltless" who takes His Name in vain, He will let you off and forget His own threat? Do you think that He will let you defy Him, and mock Him, and bandy about His Name in your jests, your anger, in public houses and markets, without revenging Himself upon you? You may not be suffering now; you may now seem to be none the worse for your oaths; but unless you repent, your oaths will turn into scorpions and bite you; they will rise up against you, and cry out against you, and crush you on the last day. The whole long, long string of your oaths, all numbered in God's book, will witness against you and will prove that you despised Christ, that you defied your Lord, that you broke His commandment and cast it to the winds. Therefore I say to you in God's own words, "Swear not at all."

NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME.

WE are all for putting off the great concern. "Come to me at a more convenient season; come to me by and by; come to me some other time; come to me when I have got through this business, when this pleasure has come to an end, when I have finished this matter which is now in hand; only do not come to me to-day." So we speak. To-morrow, to-morrow, is the day for God and the things of God; to-day is for ourselves and for the world; to-morrow is the day for the Cross of Christ, but to-day we will let the Cross alone. And as "to-morrow never comes," so some men's godliness, some men's care for their souls never comes. There is always something in the way; the farm, the oxen, the merchandise, the shop, the marriage, the pleasure, just steps in and hinders us. We often say, "if it were not for this or that, we should turn over a new leaf;" that is, if the road to heaven were broad and smooth, if it had no temptations, no trials, no difficulties, then we could tread it at once, this *very day*; but because it costs us

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self-denial, because it requires self-devotion, and deadness to this world's gains and pleasures, therefore we put off treading the way of Christ.

Now "hell," it is said, "is paved with good intentions." The proverb is full of truth. No man says, "I will go to hell; I am bent on going to it; I intend to be lost." No; we say just the contrary; we hope to go to heaven; we hope to be saved; and we intend some day to think more about religion, in order that we may be saved. We intend by and by to return to Christ our Saviour, and to make peace with God, and to lead a serious life. Such good intentions as these are like laudanum to our consciences; "all's well that ends well," so we say to ourselves, and the devil is content if he can but persuade us to delay. Delay is a great murderer of souls; it is that slow poison which eats into our life; and, lo! day goes over day, month over month, year over year, and we are only *intending* to serve God. Suddenly, perhaps, we die and drop into the grave, before God has been served, before "the convenient season" has been found, before we have actually cast ourselves at our Saviour's feet and given up ourselves to Him; before our "good intentions" *are fulfilled*.

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If indeed we wait till all is smooth, till godliness is a very easy thing, till all difficulties, all temptations, all the hindrances of a religious life are gone, we shall wait for ever; we shall be like him who stood by the river's side waiting for the stream to run itself out and to give him a dry path. When the water that hindered him one hour was gone, fresh water came down to hinder him the next. So when present temptations are at an end, some new temptation will spring up; new cares, new pleasures will flow down. We shall **never** dry the river of temptation, and we only waste our time in waiting on the bank to see it run itself out.

Believe me, my friend, "now is the accepted time;" now is the time for serving God; now is the time for walking as a faithful disciple of Christ, as a faithful member of His Church; put off every thing, delay every thing, except the work of your soul and the service of your soul. Let every thing give way to that; break down and break through all hindrances; "where there is a will there is a way." "I will find a way," said the soldier of ancient times, "or, I will make one." So do you speak now, soldier of Christ; find a way, or by God's grace *make a way through all temptations, all cares, all*

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toils, all business, all enjoyments, all schemes and plans, that you may at once walk with God, at once take up your Cross, at once crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts; at once enter on the task of conforming yourself wholly to Christ's will.

Talk not of to-morrow; do not give your to-morrows to God, and your to-days to the world; if the devil has you to-day, he will in all likelihood be more your master to-morrow. Now is his time; if you are his now, you are giving him an advantage over you. Remember the proverb, "possession is nine points of the law;" present possession is the thing; only let the devil say of you, "he is now in my possession, he is mine now," and it will be a hard matter to get out of his net some days hence; for every hour he is winding his chains tighter and tighter round your soul and deadening all your better thoughts.

O fly at once to Christ; fly to-day; cut yourself off from your favourite sin; break the chain at once; do not trifle with your soul. Once more I say, "Now is the accepted time."

*AM I FIT TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S
SUPPER?*

If you ask me, "Am I fit to receive the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?" let me say first of all, that in one sense no one is fit; neither you, nor I, nor any one in the world; the best of us are not of ourselves fit or worthy to draw near to this heavenly Feast, to draw so near to Christ, so near to the most pure, most holy Jesus, as to be made "one with Christ, and Christ with us." The best of us may well take up the centurion's words and say, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof." Or with Jacob, we may say, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant." Or in the words of the Prayer-book, we may confess that "we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy table."

It is true that we are so sinful, so stained with sin, that we are not fit even to pray, much less to receive the Lord's Supper. Like the publican, we are not worthy to lift up so much as our eyes unto heaven. God is so very pure,

and we so impure, that we might well feel ourselves unfit to approach Him in prayer. We might well say, "Will the Almighty, the all-holy, the glorious God, look on such as we? Will He hear such poor worms, such sinners as we, who provoke Him every day, who are ever grieving Him, who continually break His laws, sometimes wilfully, sometimes in ignorance, sometimes through infirmity for the moment?" And yet do you not see that God not only allows us to draw near to Him in prayer, though we have all unclean hands and unclean hearts, but He bids, He wishes us, He urges us to pray. He accepts all real earnest prayers that are offered in His dear Son's Name. He rejoices to see us on our knees. Of His great mercy and great love He is ready to receive our prayers, to receive us when we offer them, though we are of ourselves unworthy to draw near to Him. He bids us, in proof of this, draw near the House of Prayer where He dwells, that we may be sure of His presence amongst us in order to hear and to accept our prayers.

It is true that David says "God heareth not sinners;" but what does this mean? It does not mean strictly that any person who is a sinner *will not* be heard, because, as everybody is a

nor design, nor wish to leave their sins,
mere mockery of God. He mercifully
shows that those are fit to pray, who really
do have His pardon and His grace, that
they may be freed from sin.

Will not this also make some points clear
of the Lord's Supper? As we see who are
chosen by God as fit to pray, do we not also
see who are counted by God as fit to receive
the blessed Sacrament of His body and blood?
Do we not also see who are not counted by God fit to
partake of the Lord's Supper?

Man has no thought of altering his life, if
he finds to live no better than he has lived in

is not fit to come to this heavenly Feast ; then God wishes him not to come ; then, if he comes, he will not only not benefit, but will greatly hurt and wound his soul ; then he will draw down God's anger, he will provoke the Lord to punish him ; for in such a case it is a mockery to come, a most fearful, dreadful mockery of God. If a man were to come from any bad motive, such as merely to curry favour with his clergyman, to appear religious when he was not, for the sake of some worldly advantage, he would not be fit, and he would only endanger his soul by drawing near.

You can now, I think, form some judgment of your own state and your own fitness ; or rather you can see who they are whom your Lord Himself reckons fit or unfit. Are you really feeling your own weakness and sinfulness ? Are you filled with earnest desires to have greater power to resist sin ? Are you anxious to lead a stricter and more religious life, to give up the world more entirely, to have a closer walk with God, more fully to do your Saviour's will, to prepare yourself for the hour of death and the day of judgment, and the second coming of Christ ? Are you yearning for pardon of sins past, for grace for the future. If so, you may

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be sure that God will receive you ; your Saviour will draw near to you ; you will obtain pardon and grace ; the hunger of your soul will be satisfied, the thirst of your soul will be quenched ; you will be fed with that which is meat indeed, you will drink of that which is drink indeed ; your cup will be full, you will not go empty away. Nay, this blessed Feast is for such as you, for those who desire to advance in the spiritual life, who seek heaven, who wish to lead purer and holier lives, who feel their weakness, and their want of strength from above, who are conscious of their need of forgiveness and of help, who long to grow in faith, in love, in religious earnestness, in purity, in meekness, in the knowledge of God.

Every thing, you see, depends on the motives with which you come ; you will be accepted or rejected by God according to the intentions you have. Sincere intentions, sincere wishes, sincere resolutions to serve your Lord more faithfully, fit you for the Feast. Unfit as you are of yourself, unfit as in one sense you must ever be to gather up even the crumbs of the Feast, yet God will mercifully look upon you and bless you, as long as you are in earnest about your soul, as long as you come humbly and seriously,

as long as you do your best to prepare yourself, as long as you are a sincere seeker of the heavenly way, and truly anxious to obey and please God as a teachable and loving child.

Indeed, the Lord's Supper is meant to help such persons on their way. We do not spread meat before those who are full, nor drink before those who feel no thirst; so your Saviour does not bid the spiritual Feast of His body and of His blood to be spread for those who are perfect in righteousness, for those who have no weaknesses, no faults, for those who are full of all good things. It is for such as crave for heavenly help, for such as greatly desire to be stronger, more righteous, more holy, more guileless, more like Christ, more unworldly, more heavenly-minded; and who know that they cannot of themselves make themselves what they want to be.

Therefore ask your own heart and conscience, ask your own self, these questions. "Am I really wishing to be more religious? Am I sorry from my heart for all my sins and faults? Do I wish to give up and utterly forsake and completely conquer, the sins that have mastered me in past times, and that have had the greatest *power* over me? Am I resolved by God's help to

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cast off my favourite sins ? Am I in love and charity with all men ? Am I longing to love God more and more ? Am I, in short, truly, sincerely wishing to be saved by the merits of my Saviour, and so to please Him in my earthly course as to have hope of His mercy on the last great day ?" Ask yourself, I say, these questions, and if you can answer and say, "I do feel all this ; I do now purpose by God's grace to forsake my sins, and to serve my Lord more earnestly, more faithfully, more entirely in time to come," then I advise you by all means to become a partaker of the Lord's Supper.

While I would strongly urge you not to come too hastily, so I would advise you not to draw back too fearfully, nor to let unreasonable scruples hinder you from coming. Be not over-forward, or over-bold ; at the same time be not over-timid, or over-scrupulous. Though, at first, you may be in a very imperfect state, yet the Feast itself will help you to a better state ; and if you continue to take it, you may hope in time to reach a higher and still higher state, to advance step by step in God's favour and in power over yourself, to draw more benefit and more grace from this blessed Sacrament. We must do all things at first imperfectly ; but how shall we ever do

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them better, if we never make a beginning? As long as we are really in earnest, God will overlook our imperfections and infirmities, and if we persevere in seeking the means of grace which Christ Himself has ordained, we shall make gradual growth in godliness and acceptable service. Our Lord does not expect us to be saints all at once. Only let us start on the right way, only let us persevere when we have started, only let us press on and try to improve in the manner and the spirit of doing the Lord's will, and we shall be helped forward by God's Holy Spirit. But if we hold back from the means of grace and wait till we are perfect, we shall never stir a step; we shall be like hungering men holding back from the very bread that would help to make them strong.

Of course, you must make careful preparation for that heavenly banquet; you must repent deeply; you must pray fervently; you must examine yourself strictly; and then in faith draw near, in faith kneel down and offer both your soul and body to God, in faith partake of the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

LETTER FROM A CLERGYMAN TO A PARISHIONER ON CERTAIN POPULAR OBJECTIONS TO THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

MY DEAR F——,

You tell me that you have several times late found yourself in company with people, who spoke very vehemently against the Creed of St. Athanasius and the anathemas which it contains, and you ask me to furnish you with some ready and plain answer to their objections. They say, you say, "that this Creed goes far beyond the Bible in its way of stating the mysteries of the Godhead, that the truth as it is in Jesus is a simple thing, but that the Athanasian Creed is full of abstruse points of theology, and that not one in a hundred of those who say it over can be expected to understand its subtle distinctions." And then as to what they call the "damnable clauses," the verses which condemn so emphatically all who dissent from its positions—"Whereas Scripture," they ask, "say any thing of the kind? Many people do not find themselves able to believe them, who lead very good lives not-

withstanding. And are all they to be condemned eternally? And many more cannot understand them, and many again have never heard of them; and yet the Creed sentences them all in sweeping unqualified language, and declares that without doubt they shall perish everlastingly." In short, the objections you hear put forward so confidently simply amount to this: that this noble Creed, which has been recited in Church so many centuries, is at once unintelligible and uncharitable.

And these charges, my good friend, seem to have made a little impression on you, and you half own to a sort of reluctance at being called, every time this Creed is used, to pronounce such an anathema on any fellow Christians, however misbelieving they may be.

Now to you I would say, first of all, and you will feel the force of the argument—Remember how many years this Creed has been used, without cavil or in spite of it, by the wisest and best Christians that have gone before us. And it is not likely they would have done so, if it had been either unscriptural, or uncharitable. It was drawn up fourteen hundred years back, and it has made part of the Church-service for nearly twelve hundred years. At the

Reformation, whatever Christians disagreed upon, they agreed in retaining this Creed together with the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed. The Protestants abroad all kept to it. Our own Church pronounced it "thoroughly to be received and believed." (Art. viii.) And the Puritans of the time, the parents of our modern dissenters, were as unanimous in receiving it, as the dissenters now-a-days are in rejecting it; Richard Baxter, I remember, the patriarch of nonconformity, saying in one place; "I unfeignedly account the doctrine of the Trinity the very sum and substance of the Christian religion, (as expressed in our Baptism,) and Athanasius' Creed the best explication of it I ever read." (Reasons, &c., ii. 10. 6.) Remember all this, I say; do but remember how good and holy men have used and prized this Creed, how amidst the saddest conflict of opinions, all sides were yet agreed on retaining it: and you will agree with me, I think, that it can barely be the unintelligible or uncharitable composition which men sometimes call it. Let us examine, however, a little more deeply into these two points.

1. And first, when I hear people attacking the Creed of St. Athanasius, as incomprehensible to them, I generally reply by this plain question:

“ Have you ever tried to understand it? Have you ever done so much as take up your Prayer-book for one half hour, and sit down quietly and read it patiently? Have you ever asked a clergyman to explain it? or have you ever sought an explanation elsewhere?” And I generally find that their acquaintance with it is confined to hearing it in Church three or four times in the year; that its language accordingly is not quite so familiar to them as that of the other Creeds which they join in every Sunday; and that they have hastily laid the blame upon its abstruseness rather than, where they ought to have laid it, upon their own neglect. Or if they have ever given it a more careful consideration, still there is always some confusion in their complaint of its incomprehensible subtleties, and they are blaming the Creed, you will find, for nothing else than the necessary difficulty of its subject. Its subject is incomprehensible, of course. The doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation are mysteries. No Creed could make them otherwise. Its language, I am sure, is plain and intelligible enough, and gives the humblest Christian the most thorough understanding of these great truths that he is capable of. It is quite true he will not understand the exact force of every expression, and the pre-

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cise error it is meant to contradict, in the same way that another person would, who had studied the history of its composition, and the times when it was drawn up ; but he will have a very full and sufficient understanding of it nevertheless. It is not learning that is wanted. It is only an honest heart and a little pains-taking. And then as for complaining that some of the phrases of the Creed go beyond the letter of Scripture, they have been chosen to express and to guard the doctrine of Scripture ; just as in the case of other doctrines, we use the word " Sacrament " or " Original sin ; " expressions which are not to be found in Scripture, but which are very useful and simple nevertheless, and which meet with universal acceptance among Christians.

2. But I must proceed to the other charge that is made against the Creed of St. Athanasius, viz., of uncharitable harshness in its condemnatory sentences. This is a more important matter to my mind than its being difficult or unintelligible. I could be content to accept a difficult statement of doctrine upon trust from the Church, in the hope that I should be able hereafter to understand it more fully ; just as a child has to learn the commandments when it cannot know what murder and adultery are. But if I were to be

convinced in my mind that the Athanasian Creed was quite incompatible with Christian charity, and at direct variance with the command "Judge not, that ye be not judged," if after turning it over I could not come to any other conclusion, then I could never say it over without discomfort or vexation; I could not join in it, I could only say it at the appointed times, because it was ordered so. The whole tone of its condemnation is so decided:—

"Whosoever will be saved : before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith ;

Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled : without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

He therefore that will be saved : must thus think of the Trinity.

Furthermore it is necessary to everlasting salvation : that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the Catholic Faith : which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved."

Yes, this sentence of condemnation is certainly uncompromising enough. It is very solemn and awful. But I trust I shall be able to satisfy you that it is very far from being unscriptural or uncharitable, very far from containing any thing

which should give you a moment's disquiet or hesitation, when you are called to say it over. If these "damnatory clauses" had been directed against a vicious life instead of a heretical belief, I do not suppose any one would have stumbled at them for a moment. Let us try the case this way. Suppose an assembly of our Church, thinking that Christian holiness was sadly sunk among us, were to draw up a solemn service to be used once a month, something of this sort :—

"Whosoever will be saved : before all things it is necessary that he observe the great commandments of the Law ; which commandments except every one do observe, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

And the first and greatest commandment is this : that we love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength."

After this might follow an explanation of the first table of the decalogue, shewing how atheism, idolatry, superstition, blasphemy, and irreverence, all under it, while on the other hand it inculcated submission to God's will, resignation under trouble, conscientiousness, a daily habit of prayer, and reading God's Word, with attendance on

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public worship as often as we could ; all this shortly summed up ; "He therefore that would be saved : must thus do his duty towards God."

" Furthermore," the service might go on, "it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also love his neighbour as himself."

After this, suppose some solemn sentences pointing out how rebellion, and disloyalty, and disrespect to one's elders, suicide and duelling, unchastity of every kind, gluttony and drunkenness, and gambling, with perhaps some less obvious matters, were all forbidden, by implication or otherwise in this " royal law ;" and then to close it. "This is a Christian's duty towards his neighbour : which except a man keep faithfully, he cannot be saved."

Now, I say, if it was ever thought necessary to have such a service in Church, you could not say that it was uncharitable. And why ? Because it would merely be asserting just what Scripture asserts, because we have our Saviour's own word to warrant us ; "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;" with the assurance on the other hand against wilful transgressors, that they "have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." You would rightly take for granted that only wilful of-

fenders were meant. If any one had never been taught better, or had never had any opportunities of knowing God's commandments, if he had been trained up to crime by his parents from his childhood, or lived in a heathen country where some of these offences are counted no sins at all, but merits rather, if a man was to fall into them by mistake and recover himself when his duty was fairly put before him, or go on offending to the last through ignorance all along, all such cases, you would understand at once, were beyond the scope of the service, or at least of the awful sentence it pronounced. It would leave such persons in God's hands, to be mercifully dealt with according to their light. The denunciations, you would see at once, were directed against wilful offenders, against men who knew what was right and did what was wrong, and persisted in it to the last. And you would think it true Christian charity, and not unkindness, to speak out plainly God's own sentence, that "they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

Now just apply all this, F——, to the Athanasian Creed, and you ought to have as little scruple about it. What is there that is over-harsh in it? Why think it uncharitable to condemn here-

tical belief, any more than a vicious life? Holy Scripture is as express for one as for the other. You could not well have more awful language than it employs respecting unbelief, or misbelief. St. Peter speaks of "damnable heresies," and adds of those teachers who privily brought them in, that their "judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." (2 Pet. ii. 1, 3.) And St. Paul, when warning the Thessalonians of the false doctrines of antichrist, has the words, "that all they might be damned that believed not the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 12.) And our gracious Saviour Himself, His last words according to St. Mark, "He that believeth not shall be damned." (St. Mark xvi. 16.) It makes one tremble to go over such texts. It is like touching the edge of God's sword. But when men would have that in matters of faith He beareth the sword in vain; it is only a necessary vindication of His hand, if we enter His armoury and point to His weapons hanging up. There they are, these texts. Holy Scripture has its "damnatory clauses, as much as St. Athanasius' Creed."

And then observe, F——, what the doctrines are which it protects in this solemn manner. *Just those very two, which are the prominent*

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ones in the Creed: the doctrines namely, of the Holy Trinity and of the Incarnation of our blessed Lord. For to take again our Saviour's words, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but He that believeth not shall be damned." What belief He meant to secure by this solemn sentence is plain: a belief undoubtedly in that Trinity, in Whose name we are baptized. "Go ye into all the world," was His command at the same time, "and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (St. Matt. xxviii. 19.) A more exact warrant then for what are called the anathemas of the first part of the Athanasian Creed could not well be found, and from His mouth too, who was very truth and love.

And as for its other great doctrine, the Incarnation, that is guarded by Holy Scripture in the same emphatic way. "He that believeth not the Son," were that Son's own words, "shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John iii. 36.) And the beloved disciple who records this sentence of his Master's, adds also his own; "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, that denieth *the Father and the Son*."

(1 John ii. 22, 23.) And again, in his second very short Epistle; "Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any man unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 John v. 7, &c.) And there is an anecdote recorded of St. John in ecclesiastical history, which shews that he acted as he wrote. For one time, it is said, as he was entering a public bath-house at Ephesus, he was told that Cerinthus, a noted leader of the heretics, one that denied Christ was come in the flesh, was within; and that he left the place, hastily crying out to his company to "be gone, lest the roof should fall in upon such an enemy of the truth."

Surely the very spirit of the Athanasian Creed runs through this incident, as also through the verses I have quoted from the Epistle, and a startling thing it is, coming from the disciple *whom* Jesus loved, himself the Apostle of love.

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A very startling thing it is to find St. John feeling so keenly, and the Bible speaking so positively of doctrinal errors, and making men accountable for their Creed as much as for their lives. There is a different tone, you have felt, abroad in the world. It is a different state of mind which makes people feel dissatisfied sometimes and uncomfortable at hearing this noble Creed. "As for adultery, gambling and the like," your acquaintance urge, "why this is clearly wrong, but as for modes of faith it is mere bigotry to insist upon them in this way. Why the best men are disagreed about it ; there are good and pious Socinians and pious Baptists and pious Church-people ; and so long as they serve God with their hearts, what is the great difference between them ?" Those who say this, will often be worldly people who care nothing about the question. But sometimes you may hear such language from a serious Christian, who has his own orthodox belief, yet looks upon all denominations as only so many roads to heaven. But whoever says it, dear F——, believe me, it is wrong. It is wrong altogether. It is wrong as sure as Scripture is true. Holy Scripture says that false belief does make a difference, and the chief doctrines of this Creed are the

very two which it singles out to guard by the most solemn anathemas against all who wilfully reject them. Holy Scripture denounces a *wilful* heretic in the same way that it denounces a wilful drunkard or thief. I lay stress upon the word wilful, because of course there is a natural equity to be observed in interpreting its sentence, without which it would not be easy to reconcile Scripture, and for want of which St. Athanasius' Creed has been visited with so many hasty accusations. This distinction you would readily make in the service, I suppose, against a vicious life, and so, when you read over the Athanasian Creed, you must surely see that it cannot be meant to apply (for instance) to people who have never heard of Christ, to heathen-born who have never had the Gospel preached to them. They are out of the question. So again with people who have been born where false religion, where some spurious Christianity prevails, who have been taught it by their parents and have never had the Catholic doctrine set before them; all these cases we must equitably understand are beyond the scope of these "damnatory clauses." Their errors indeed we condemn, when we recite the Creed, but we do not touch their persons.

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Those whom we do condemn are men who were taught the true faith, and then out of wilfulness rejected it, or who had every opportunity of learning it and chose to shut their ears. There are such men unhappily, men who have not (what the world would call) a blemish against their moral character, patterns for honest industry, and correct behaviour among men, but who yet are unbelievers or heretics, and by their own fault too. You must have met men often, who are simply too proud to believe what God has revealed. They take a pleasure in being less credulous than other people, and think it shews their superior abilities. They criticise Holy Scripture with an irreverent freeness, and so come to deny the great mysteries of God. These, F——, are the people whom this Creed condemns, whom Scripture condemns. They are as much responsible before God for this unhumble presumptuous temper, as they could be for impurity or dishonesty. And true Christian charity it is, and not unkindness, to speak out and warn them plainly, that God has given us a faith to believe as well as a law to walk by, and that His Holy Spirit tells us of a second death in store for the “unbelievers,” as well as for

the unrepentant "fornicators or murderers." (Rev. xxi. 8; xxii. 15.)

Bearing all this in mind, the Athanasian Creed will always seem a very solemn service. It is so indeed. As we say it over, its words ought to remind us forcibly that we are responsible for what we believe, and that in all reason we should take pains to inform ourselves about it. But it carries with it nothing of uncharitable feeling toward other men. It is far from having any thing unchristian or unscriptural in its censures. It does but call us to take God's part in this naughty world, and maintain the integrity of His truth just as we would the holiness of His law. It does but uphold the mystery of the faith, which God has given in charge to His Church, and by which we hope to be saved, against all denial or evasion of man.

However, F——, I must confess that this negative way of speaking does not half express my feelings when I say over the Creed. It is a poor thing to say that every word in it may be abundantly justified, and that it has nothing but what we may heartily assent to. I have very different thoughts about it. It carries me back to the times when the main truths of the Gospel had

first to fight their way in this world. Great battles they were. Satan was not dislodged from his strongholds at a blow. And when the atheism and the idolatry of the heathen world had been conquered and Christianity began to be looked upon as the established religion, about three hundred years after our Lord's Ascension, then the father of lies made his last and most desperate effort in perverting the truth which he could not resist. The history is a well-known one. A clergyman, named Arius, was Satan's chief instrument: explaining away the great mystery of Christ's divinity by one subtle distinction or other. And after his death even, for he dropped down dead, the very day he was celebrating his victory, it was a hard-fought struggle. Many were the alternate reverses of truth and error. At one time false doctrine seemed quite successful; the emperor was enlisted on the wrong side, the true part of the Church intimidated, the heretics encouraged. Athanasius the bishop of Alexandria, the great champion of the faith, stood almost single, not the comfort of one peaceable home left him, himself deprived of his Church and another bishop put in his room, his character defamed, his life in danger, forsaken by men who once stood by him, and had been as earnest

defenders of the truth as he; "in him alone nothing is observed but what became a wise man to do, and a righteous man to suffer." In short it was "the whole world against Athanasius, and Athanasius against it; half a hundred of years spent in doubtful struggle which of the two would in the end prevail; the side which had all, or else the part which had no friend but God and death: God the defender of his innocence and death the finisher of his troubles." (Hooker, Ec. Pol. v. 54. 5.) I need only say now that God's side finally prevailed, and the Creed of which we have been writing, drawn up after St. Athanasius' death from his works, comes down to us as the perpetual trophy of it. And every clause in it seems to me like a hardly-contested battle-field. It may have lain quiet and undisturbed enough for centuries: but then it was that in old time the soldiers of God met the prince of this world with every alternation of victory and defeat; then it was, in short, that the good fight of faith was fought and was won.

I must not look, perhaps, to carry you along with me in all this. One must have studied the history of this saint and of the time in which he *lived*. One must have watched his different

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struggles and followed him into his exile. But still I hope I have said enough abundantly to vindicate this noble Creed from the objections you have heard against it, and that I have succeeded in shewing you how little reason there is for any inward uneasiness at the appointed repetition of it. On the contrary; its doctrines will receive our most hearty assent as nothing but what plain Scripture teaches, and what we must cling to as the very hope of our souls. And instead of being inclined to except at the way in which this doctrine is stated, you will rather feel thankful, that all has been drawn out so clear and plain for us beforehand, that God has given us richly to enjoy an inheritance for which St. Athanasius had to fight, that other men have laboured and we have entered into their labours. Its solemn comminations too, you will as cordially accept, as being the very language of God's own Word; nay, you will feel thankful for them, you will "kiss the rod." You may be sure that now of all times they are most useful, that now of all times men need to be forcibly reminded that God asks the submission of our intellects, (what they are so unwilling to give Him,) that they must bow to His truth as well as obey His will, and that they are re-

sponsible for what they believe as much as for what they do.

Such, I repeat, is the main lesson of the Athanasian Creed. And the more you think about it, the more I feel persuaded you will see how valuable it is to us, and what little weight really lies in the popular objections which you hear taken against it. I will only add my prayer, shortly, that all your searchings after truth may ever be made in such a reverent and humble spirit as will ensure God's blessing upon them, that He may remove all scruples and doubtfulness, and keep you steadfast in His faith.

Your affectionate friend and pastor.

EDWARD ELFORD; OR, WHO'S AFRAID?

EDWARD ELFORD was one of the nicest boys in Eglos-ros, or Church-heath. Every boy in the school liked him; was he any the better for this? No: for if he had been firm, and always done his duty, some boys would have disliked him: but he was not always firm. His face was open, full of happiness and kindness. You could see at once, that he was good-natured, generous, and brave, as the world calls people brave. But whether he was truly brave or not, we shall see hereafter.

However, all the boys of the school considered Edward brave, and not without reason: for not long after he came to school, he defended one of his playfellows against an idle boy, who was plaguing him, a boy older and stronger than himself: and although he was severely beaten he would not give in, and kept on defending his friend until a man who was coming by ended the quarrel.

Another thing which he had done, was perhaps still braver. He was sent on an errand with a basket, and as he was going along the road, the farmer's wife for whom his father worked, came by in a gig with her little girl, and seeing him toiling along with his basket, and appearing much tired, she very kindly took him up. They had not gone far, however, before a gun was fired off behind the hedge: the horse took fright, and started forward so suddenly that the reins slipped out of Mrs. Pascoe's hands, and the horse galloped on with them along the road. On and on he went, and did not seem likely to stop; only one field more remained to pass, and then they would be on the top of a steep hill, where the road was narrow and winding, and ledges of smooth rock crossed it constantly. It was quite impossible that they could reach the bottom of this hill in safety, if the horse did not stop. Edward saw this, and treading on the shaft, he jumped on the horse's back; the horse gave another start, and almost upset the gig. Edward, however, clung to him, and gathering up the reins, he threw the long end of them over his shoulder, so that Mrs. Pascoe caught it, and the horse was pulled up in time.

After this, of course, Edward's reputation stood high. He was praised very much, and it did not make him vain; for this was not his temptation. It is no praise to us not to yield to the faults which others have, when those faults are contrary to our own disposition, and so we are not inclined to fall into them. Edward then was not vain of his courage; but he was thoroughly astonished one day, when Mr. Thompson, his master, told him that he was cowardly. Yet Mr. Thompson was right. The master was walking in his garden after school, and he heard the voices of some of his scholars disputing in the lane, which ran under the garden wall. He stopped and listened, and in a few minutes he distinguished Edward's voice and those of three other boys, one belonging to the school, and the other two not.

"You might just as well come," said one.

"No, I won't," answered Edward Elford.

"Why not, you fool?"

"That's not the way to make me come, I can tell you."

"Well, I didn't mean it. But do come, we shall have such a lark."

"No, I won't."

"Why not?"

“ Is it not stealing ? ”

“ Yes, Sir.”

“ Look then, Edward ; those boys had absolutely persuaded you to go with them and steal, steal, Edward, because you were afraid of their laughing at you. Is this brave ? No ; this is being a coward, the worst sort of coward ! a coward because of a word, and in your duty to God and man ! O, Edward, take this as a warning. You do not know what this will lead you to unless you conquer it now. You must learn not to care for the laughter of fools. Remember that God sees you. His opinion of you is more than that of those wicked boys : is it not ? Be afraid of offending God, and do not be afraid of making men laugh at you. Laughter cannot hurt, but sin will cast body and soul into hell.”

Soon after this, Edward did another very brave thing. He was playing one evening in an old farm-yard, in which some of the sheds had been turned into cottages. The women and children were walking about, as the children were picking up some peas, which had been shaken out in carting. All on a sudden Edward heard a noise, and looking up, he saw a bull coming down the lane opposite, followed by some men with pitchforks. It seemed to have come a long way,

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foaming all over, and looking wildly about. It made straight for the gate of the yard, and in a minute, would have been amongst the children, who had not time to escape. Edward did not hesitate a moment; he ran forward to shut the gate, and got to it just in time to dash it in the face of the raging creature, but not in time to latch it. The bull saw the gate coming, and ran full at it, throwing up his head as it struck the gate. Edward was knocked down, and the bull rushed on, carrying the gate upon its horns. The poor women and children screamed with fright; but the next minute the bull stopped. It tried to free itself from the gate, tossed it, and shook it, and all in vain; and meantime the women and children ran into the cottages and were safe. Poor Edward was taken up quite senseless; his head was severely cut, and his left arm broken. Of course every one was kind to him in his illness. Nothing was wanting to amuse him or give him nourishment. Mr. Thompson often visited him. The clergyman also came frequently, and learning his character from Mr. Thompson, he took great pains to improve the opportunity of Edward's illness, and with God's blessing to send him forth a better boy.

But Mr. Trelawny, the vicar, had no need to

find out Edward's great fault from the master ; he was too soon obliged to witness it himself. He had been gradually leading Edward to wish to return thanks publicly in Church for his safety, so soon as he should be well enough to go there. Edward's father and mother, indeed, were the persons to act in this ; but still the vicar wished Edward to take an interest in it himself, and to desire it. At first, he was quite satisfied with the boy's feelings ; but soon he was grieved and surprised to find that Edward had changed his mind, and did not seem to wish to return thanks. He enquired of his parents, and found that some other boys had been talking to Edward, and laughing at him about it ; saying how odd it would sound to hear his name given out, and that they were sure they could not help laughing when they heard it.

Mr. Trelawny took the first opportunity on which he could see Edward alone to speak to him ; and he found that Edward's parents were right : he was afraid of what people would say, and shrunk from it.

"You afraid!" said Mr. Trelawny : "I thought you were a brave boy. Afraid of a laugh ! of a word ! Should you like to be called a coward by the boys, Edward?"

"No, Sir."

"You would be afraid of that. Would you not?"

"I should not like it, Sir."

"Well then, you are ashamed of cowardice. Now, tell me, which is the most important, the body or the soul?"

"The soul, Sir."

"Which is best to have,—the soul healthy, safe, happy, and strong; or the body?"

"The soul, Sir."

"Yes, Edward, every thing of the soul is better than any thing of the body. When we see a man strong, and well, and active, and handsome, and know that he is dead in sin, he seems only like a whited sepulchre to us: when we think of it we shudder. Now, Edward, there is a bravery of the soul, as well as of the body; and the bravery of the body is nothing to it. If a man is a coward in soul, he is an hundredfold a coward; and he deserves all the laughter and shame that can be cast upon him.

"To be brave in body, is not to fear pain or danger to the body; to do as you did when you met the bull, not to be afraid of the body being hurt or killed. To be brave in soul, is, not to fear those things which the soul feels. I do not

mean, not to fear God's anger and the sting of conscience. A man is mad, not brave, who does not fear these. To be brave in soul is not to fear difficulty, sorrow, shame, laughter, in saving the soul. He who has not courage to save his soul, and loses it for a laugh, is as much a coward as he who is too much afraid to pump the ship when it is filling, and so is drowned. A coward in soul, Edward, is the worst coward of any.

“ Now, my boy, do struggle against this cowardice ; it will be your ruin if you do not. Do not fear the laughter and reproaches of wicked boys ; I will tell you whom to fear. Fear God ; ‘ yea, I say unto you,’ in Christ's Name and in Christ's words, ‘ yea, I say unto you,’ fear Him. Fear Him who can cast both body and soul into hell. Remember, Edward, He always sees you. Remember, Edward, you are sworn, solemnly sworn to be brave for Christ, ‘ manfully to fight under His banner.’ Remember too the Lord's words, ‘ Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He shall come in His glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels.’ How would you bear Christ to be ashamed of you in that day ? Take heed, then, take heed never to be ashamed of Him or his Word, or your duty,

or your religion, or your principles now; and then He Himself says, that He will confess you before God and the holy angels."

The vicar had another conversation with Edward very soon after this, in which he shewed him how plainly sinful his false shame was, from its so nearly leading him to give up thanking God for fear of the laughter of man.

Alas! in this fault Edward was not alone. How many persons through false shame neglect the service of God, are afraid to sing in the congregation, to repeat the answers clearly, or to bow at the Saviour's Name! and how many, for fear of being thought strict, dishonour the Fasts and Feasts of the Church, and fall into worldly and unchristian ways, not because they like them, but because they dread the ridicule of those who do! Surely, they forget the Saviour's words; "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you." "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven."

Edward Elford was much impressed by what Mr. Trelawny said to him, and went so far right as to return thanks in Church for his deliverance

and recovery. This filled Mr. Trelawny and Mr. Thompson with hope. It was a step in the right direction, and they trusted that it was a first step, and the beginning of walking upon it entirely.

But Edward did not take even this first step well. If he had prayed beforehand for strength to steel him against ridicule ; if he had tried earnestly to think of Christ as seeing and watching him, during the service, and afterwards, when he was leaving the Church, then he might have been saved from much sin. He did not do this. Although he stood up when his name was mentioned, he did it unwillingly ; he thought not of God whom he was thanking, but of men who were looking at him. His thoughts were all on man ; his heart went from God at the very time when he seemed to be giving it to Him ; and, therefore, as he left the Church, instead of being calm and happy with love and faith, he was dreading the eyes of his old companions. This was the very way to a fall, and accordingly he fell. The lads who had before laughed at Edward were waiting round the porch ; and, like so many devils, whose work indeed they were doing, they began to taunt him, and say many godless things which cannot be repeated. Edward felt angry

and ashamed, and tried to escape; but his persecutors followed him, and two of them took him by the arm, and half dragged him into a lane which led from the Church to the heath. Edward made several attempts to free himself, but he did not like to use force; so they had their way. The good people leaving the Church stopped in suspense and displeasure to see the sort of bustle and crowd which the lads were making. At this time Mr. Trelawny came out: he guessed at once what was going on; and, going up to the boys, he dispersed them, and told Edward to walk home with him. But, before he arrived amongst them, the mischief was done. Edward, ashamed of his duty, had said that he had given thanks to please the vicar and so disowned his act. No sooner had he spoken, than conscience began to do its work, which is always to punish the sinner when it could not save him from sin. He was vexed and ashamed; nothing that the vicar could say seemed to give him any pleasure; and it was clear that something was wrong. At once Mr. Trelawny set himself to root out this wrong before it became settled and fixed; but all he could do was useless; Edward's false shame had made him sin, and now it prevented his confessing. Mr. Trelawny could not draw out from him

what had happened, and so he could do nothing for him. The vicar went home, with a sad heart, from his love of souls ; Edward, with a sad heart, from an evil conscience.

Soon after this Edward went out as farm-servant into a neighbouring parish. The farm was far from the village, and the clergyman seldom saw him. Edward was the only lad on the farm, so that he had none of his old temptations when in his work ; and when he went down to the village he was not known. During his stay, then, at this place, he did not seem to get either better or worse respecting his great fault ; but really he was worse, for ever since his refusal to open his mind to Mr. Trelawny, he had become less and less religious. He felt as if he had cut himself off from the only person that could do his soul good, and he became careless.

After three years Edward returned a strong and fine youth to Eglos-ros. Mr. Trelawny sought him out at once, and tried to get some influence over him. Edward was pleased and softened by the vicar's continued kindness and patience, and seemed likely to improve, when one circumstance fixed his whole course for evil.

At the end of the heath was a public-house called "The Rose," and in the spring a few

booths and carts were collected together, and made what was called the Rose Fair. There was really nothing of a fair about it ; it was only an excuse for men to leave their work for a few days, and spend all they had in drinking. From this fair Edward had always been kept away by his parents ; and even now that he was more his own master, he would not go to it. Unfortunately, however, his new master sent him past "The Rose" at this very time with a horse which was to go to the farrier. When Edward came to the fair, he saw the farrier amongst the men round the door of the house, and was therefore obliged to stop. He soon told his errand. The farrier looked at the horse's neck, dressed it, and gave Edward a bottle of oil to take back. Meantime some of the men and lads had come up and surrounded them, and when Edward was getting ready to mount and return, one of his old friends brought out a pot of beer foaming over the sides, and looking most tempting, and offered some to Edward. Edward thanked him, and took some. Then another man came forward and did the same ; and Edward, after hesitating, drank again. Whilst this was going on, one of the lads slipped the bridle out of Edward's hands, and was leading the horse into the stable.

“ Stop there !” Edward cried out when he noticed it.

“ Never mind him !” one of the men answered.
“ You must come and have a pint with us.”

“ No ; I can’t, indeed. My master will be finely angry if I do.”

“ Oh ! he’ll never know, man. Come in, come in.”

“ I won’t, I won’t,” said Edward, and he burst away. But before he overtook his horse, he heard them calling after him, and saying that he was a shabby fellow and a sneak, for drinking other people’s beer, and not treating them in return. This vexed him. He stopped, took out some money, and offered to pay for a quart for the company. But all refused, unless he would stay and drink it with them. For a time he refused ; but the men saw that he was really hesitating, and they never left persecuting him until they had got him into the house, and seated him in the midst of the party. All was now over. Quart followed quart. Edward’s pocket was soon empty, but still they drank. Not being used to drinking, he was soon tipsy, and was more excited than any of the drunken fellows round him. A row followed before midnight ; the windows were broken ; two men were hurt,

and next morning Edward with others was in custody.

From this time Edward rapidly grew worse. He was ashamed to meet steady persons, and chose bad companions, that he might have no one to reproach him. In his heart was that which reproached him more than men could, an offended conscience. But conscience only destroys when it does not save. When men will not obey it, they try to silence it; they go against it out of mere opposition to it, and become reckless and hardened.

Edward's ruin came quickly. He was brave in bodily courage, and did not fear danger, so that he ran greater risks in doing wrong than men worse than himself would. O what a sad reproach to a man at the last day to hear it told that he was brave unto sin, and a coward unto righteousness !

Thus it was that in a few months Edward Elford became one of a band of poachers. He had fallen into disgrace, lost regular work, and was known to be living by some dishonest means. He was often seen with those who were known to be old poachers, and people judged of him by his friends. But suspicions soon became certainties.

It was a bright winter's night, upon which the poachers had fixed to rob a preserve of pheasants at the end of the parish. They met at the spot fixed upon, and went at once to their work, some watching, and some snaring the birds. Two hours were already spent, and they had secured a great many birds, when a low whistle gave the alarm. Some keepers were coming on their rounds to see that all was quiet, not knowing that the poachers were so near. It was resolved to hide, and avoid a fight. Accordingly, the poachers concealed themselves as they could in the shadows of the large trees, and in thick bushes of holly. But this did not save them; for the keepers had a large dog which soon found one of the men, and seized him by the leg. The man could not shake him off, and in a few minutes the keepers were upon him. Meanwhile, the rest of the gang sneaked out of their hiding places, and ran off on the other side of the wood, except Edward, who would not abandon his comrade. He was close by, and watching his opportunity, he rushed on the keepers whilst they were tying his companion's arms; and knocking one over, grappled with the other, calling on his friend to run whilst he could. But the dog had seized him again, and Edward

then had to defend himself against two men, both stronger than he was. He gave and received some desperate blows, as he tried to fall back on the wood, and the keepers pressed upon him. At last, excited with pain and the closer and closer nature of the fight, he lost all command of himself, and defending himself with one arm, he drew a large clasp-knife from his pocket, opened it with his teeth, and then turned upon his pursuers. They hesitated a moment, but not more, and then closed with him. The struggle was short and sharp. In three minutes Edward was a prisoner, and secured ; and one of the keepers rose from kneeling upon him, pressed his hand to his side, which was bleeding fast, and fell fainting to the ground. Meantime, help had come from the next farm, where the noise had been heard, and the prisoners and the wounded man were carried away. Edward had been in prison some days before Mr. Trelawny was able to visit him. The trial was coming on, and it was still doubtful whether the wounded keeper would recover. He was sitting with his arms crossed in sullen despair, when the door of his cell opened, and Mr. Trelawny stood before him. Edward's better feelings were roused ; he could

not bear such kindness, and he turned away without speaking.

It will not throw any more light on Edward's character to mention all that passed at this meeting, and the others which followed. Mr. Trelawny never left his parishioner until by sympathy, and warning, and earnest prayer, he had brought him to repentance. Then it mattered little what was the issue of the trial ; for if God pardons, all else is as nothing.

Edward Elford is now a convict : but he is a happier man, although disgraced, and far away from all whom he loves ; he is a happier man than he ever was after his recovery from the injury of the bull. He would not put himself to shame, so he fell into sin, and brought shame an hundredfold upon himself. Edward dreaded a little laughter of fools, and had to bear the shame of a felon. But now he is a changed man ; and, when last he wrote to his kind vicar, he said : " O Sir, if I had not been ashamed of doing my duty, I should never have been here. But I am thankful, I hope, even for this ; for God has not left me, though I left Him ; and I trust Christ will not be ashamed even of such a sinner as I am, when He comes in judgment !"

PATIENCE IN AFFLICTION.

I WAS proceeding on my morning round to visit the sick people of the parish, when on turning into Church lane, I came suddenly upon a medical man whom I knew, I may say, happily, for he was most kind to the poor.

“You are the very person that I wanted to see,” said he, holding out his hand. After mutual expressions of good wishes for each other’s health, he pointed to a house,

“No. 11,” he said, “I think it is, in that house is a woman suffering under one of the most terrible diseases which falls under our observation, internal cancer; I have been sent for to attend her professionally, and the daughters have so plainly told me their circumstances, that I am satisfied they would pay me in time, if they made almost any exertion to do so; I need not tell you that I shall never take any thing from them; the poor woman is a widow, there are two daughters, shirt-makers, and the son, a lad, is apprenticed to a carpenter, but

not earning sufficient to pay for his food ; they are all very neat ; and here is a new difficulty I suggest necessities, a little French brandy some good arrow-root ; they say ‘ Yes,’ they will get it, perhaps they get one thing, and omit another. I know the real truth to be this, they have no means : the poor woman must die of her disease, though I know not how long she may linger. I really cannot afford to give them money, though I will give them medicine and attendance. I have just said that you would visit them and pray with her, and that if I meet you, I would ask you to call ; now,” he said “ they are in your hands, I shall be quite satisfied you will do what is best for them.”

I thanked him for the information he had given me, and for the opportunity of performing my duty to a sick parishioner ; going straight to the house, it was No. 11 ; I knocked at the door, and a child came :

“ Does Mrs. Lyons live here ?” I said.

“ Yes sir, up three pair and turn to your right you knock three single knocks for her, a double for us. Miss Lyons,” shouted the child, “ Miss Lyons, here’s some gentleman wants you.”

Passing the child I went up stairs, and upon the second landing, lighted by an open door

I was met by a young woman apparently about twenty-five years of age; her complexion looked yellow, and she bore the impress of over-work, but her eye was bright, with an expression such as I cannot soon forget. I said that I was the Curate of the parish, and having heard from her doctor that she had a mother suffering under a severe illness, I had come to offer my services in praying with and for her.

"I am very thankful," she said, "to Mr. Clarke, for his kindness, it is my mother's earnest wish to have the prayers of the Church, and to prepare herself for a death which we feel cannot be very far distant. Will you walk up stairs, and I will go with you; my mother had just dozed, but I fear the child has waked her."

She took me to the room: it was one of those dingy upper rooms which belong to houses that have known richer inhabitants; looking out on smoking chimneys, dull tiled roofs and back yards; one of those rooms which every body who knows London in places where its inhabitants struggle for existence will easily recognise. I followed her into the room, and before me lying on a bed just awake was Mrs. Lyons.

"Is it you, Mary Anne?" she said.

"Yes mother, and Mr. Clarke has sent a Cler-

gyman to see you, Mr. —, I do not know your name, sir."

"Izard," I said; "I am come to pray with you, Mrs. Lyons, and if it be your wish, will offer up the prayers of the Church for you."

"Thank you, thank you, sir," she said, in an earnest manner, "I am very glad to see you."

"Mary Anne, my dear, give Mr. Izard a chair."

I was seated immediately, and her daughter begged me to excuse her, as she had some work to send home; she left the room, and I was alone with my suffering parishioner. She told me that she had been long afflicted. I then pointed out the object of my visit, to invite her to review her past life, and to prepare for another. I was indeed glad to find that I came in some measure to receive instruction, as well as to give it; she told me her history, not an uncommon one, of which I will relate so much as a pastor may without breach of confidence. She had been left a widow about fourteen years previously with four children, one died shortly after she lost her husband; they had been in business and were living very happily, when after a long illness her husband died, the business was sold, and with the little money that remained after *his debts* and funeral expenses were paid, she

attempted a little shop ; people got into her debt, it did not answer, all her money was swallowed up in it; she did not despair, but cleaned bonnets, and took in plain needle-work ; in this way she had brought up her family.

“ And have you no friends ? ” said I.

“ Yes,” she said, they had had friends, who has not ? but as they grew poorer they could not afford to keep up their acquaintance. Now they were quite alone, sometimes an old friend came in, but not often ; the truth was that they had crept up into those dark rooms out of the world’s gaze ; they would hide their poverty ; soon they were forgotten. Ah, how very soon we forget those who are poor, trying to put them away from us ; so did Mrs. Lyons’ friends. When she lived in a wide street, and went to the parish Church every Sunday with her children neatly dressed, they were anxious to know her ; now that she was up three pair of stairs in such an out of the way place they could not get at her : she had left off going to morning service too, she went in the evening, so that they did not meet at Church : but Mrs. Lyons did not murmur ; it was very natural, so much what she expected ; some knew her loss, that of a good husband ; and her children, they too had lost a fond

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father ; but it was his gain, he had lived a Christian life, and God had called him out of a world of care to an everlasting rest. Thus she went on, at intervals moaning from extreme pain. I found in continuing the conversation that she had been a regular communicant, accustomed to self-examination, and still using daily prayer ; that she had been a constant attendant at the Lord's Supper up to the time of her husband's death, but since had only communicated at Easter and Christmas ; she had, she said, sunk out of notice, and hardly dared to go where she should meet old friends.

I asked her if she did not think she had deprived herself of much spiritual comfort, and pointed out to her that it was in adversity we found the greatest comfort from the Holy Sacrament, because we were then able to realize in it more fully the doctrine of the Cross. I knelt down to pray, using the Visitation for the Sick, and had uttered the ejaculation, " O Lord, save Thy servant," when she was seized by one of the paroxysms which accompany the disease. Her daughter came into the room, and wiped the perspiration which rolled in drops down her face ; it was painful to witness the agony she endured ; *in a few minutes* it was over, and she begged me

to continue the prayer, in which she joined with the greatest fervour. After I concluded I left her, promising to call again very soon, and to see her regularly while it should please God to grant her life; on leaving the room, I went into the passage, and again talked with the daughter, who told me that they had lived very comfortably until their mother's illness, that even now they had no debt except the doctor's bill, they had always made it a rule to avoid debt, they bought a few things for their mother, not all they wished, nor all she required, but she was so patient, she was always satisfied with what she had. I then said that I had a few things by me, which the doctor had told me that it was essential her mother should have, and that I would bring them to her the next day; she thanked me, said that she feared it would be giving me trouble, and that her sister should come to my house in the evening for them; I declined, as I wished to see my new friends, and to establish myself on such a footing as would enable me to assist, without wounding that honourable principle which induced them to struggle on without asking aid.

On the following day I returned to the house, taking with me the *things* recommended by the

doctor, again I said the prayers of the Church with the sick woman, and this time not forgetting the three single knocks; the door was opened to me by the younger sister; she had the same yellow look, the same dark eye, the same raven-hair, the same quiet, resigned expression as her sister, perhaps a little more life; or did I fancy it because she went out for the work, and took it home when it was finished? her sister never went out except on Sunday to Church, no not anywhere, yet neither seemed to wish for any change; I suggested a little walk before they began their work, as they were so close in their attendance in a sick room; they both resisted, and Mary Anne said she could not afford the time, the payment was so small as to make every minute of importance. When I heard their earnings I knew how precious time must be. My visits continued, becoming more frequent as the sufferer drew nearer her end; she had received the Holy Communion several times, believing her death to be at hand; occasionally the suffering was continued with only a few minutes intervening; months rolled away, months of anxiety to those toiling daughters, on whom rested the whole burden of the family, *yet their looks never changed, unless it was to*

brighten when I spoke of the Christian's lot of suffering as his portion, or pointed to some bright example of faith and patience; then they would look up from their work, and pray that they might have strength to fulfil their duties, and cheerfully bear whatever it might please God to lay upon them. At length Mrs. Lyons' sufferings drew to a close; it was really a body wasted by long daily pain, yet no murmur escaped her lips, each visit became a last farewell, each meeting a surprise; at length, on calling one morning, I found that she had died in the night, and the chamber of suffering was become the chamber of death; the daughters met me overwhelmed with grief; I joined with them in prayer, and after hearing from them the account of their mother's death and her entire resignation I left them, fully assured that they sorrowed not as those without hope; they had sustained a heavy loss, one that those who have a large circle of friends and many distracting cares, can hardly understand; they had lost her whose praise sweetened their labours, for whom it was rather a pleasure than a duty to toil; however common-place she might seem to the rest of the world, she was a mother, all whose struggles they had seen, whose cares and bosom anxieties they

had shared; she was perfectly unselfish; once she expressed a wish to die; it was so sad, she said, that she should so long be a burden to those two poor girls, they worked all day, and sat up by turns with her at night. And when I told her she must patiently wait her release, that they did not feel it a burden, she said she did bless God, who of His mercy had given her such affectionate children. "I have laboured for them, He knows how gladly, and He puts it now into their hearts to labour for me, to Him be all the praise." We may ask if such an example is real; I say yes, it is a story of real life; and if we wonder what it was sustained two females under such trials, what it was that supported them, and made their poor chambers bright places, I must say it was a really religious education; they had learned to believe that afflictions do not spring out of the dust, neither are they the offspring of a blind chance, but a part of the dealings of Almighty God with His creatures, which though hidden from them while here, will be fully revealed to them hereafter. They had learned the sanctity of suffering, and in their poverty had still clung to their faith. Every Sunday they went to Church, and they told me they had found it an *unspeakable* comfort when under the deepest

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affliction to go there, and in the presence of another world, forget the anxious cares of this ; there they had found strength for their labours, and there a ray of hope would break out when all seemed cloudy and dark around. In referring to my visit, they said that up to that time they had managed to get nearly all their mother needed ; it had been their earnest prayer that she might not want for any thing, and at the moment those powers failed them, God had mercifully provided for her beyond their expectations, almost beyond her wants. If we only regard this narrative with the eye of a worldly person, there is little perhaps to admire ; we see a family reduced by a very ordinary occurrence from comfort to poverty ; a mother struggling with her children for many years to ward away hopeless poverty, that mother at length yielding to disease rather than to the infirmities of age, receiving the willing succour of those children who think no sacrifice too great that they can make for her. But let us look at the hidden life, at that sanctity which is given to willing suffering ; they looked to the Cross, and saw in the blessed Jesus a perfect example of disinterested love ; they had learned that because He laid down His life for us, we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren,

and in that home was opened a fountain of holy affections, of daily blessed sacrifices, of home love. Who can express the inward joy of that mother as she watched the children while growing into womanhood, growing in faith, and in purity of life? There was real practical religion, the religion we all so much want; not the religion of books or papers, but the religion of Jesus carried about in their hearts, and influencing their daily lives; few who passed that dingy house knew who had been there, hallowing and blessing it; there Jesus had taught by His agony and bloody sweat, by His Cross and Passion. Even now as I pass that door, and hurry to and fro, I am carried back to that still chamber, and that dark room; dark, because no sun-ray pierces its thick gloom; dark, because there labour on the patient uncomplaining ones of this world, but bright because there the Sun of Righteousness has shone, melting hearts with His love, and teaching them that from out the well of life they may draw water to quench the furnace of the world's afflictions, and to endure with patience whatever trials of life it may please God to lay upon them.

*A WORD TO THE DEAF ABOUT COMING
TO CHURCH.*

“WELL, my friend, so as you are deaf you think it of no use to keep your Church; you think it waste labour to go up on Sundays to the House of God, because you cannot hear the prayers, or the Bible, or the sermon. ‘What is the good,’ you say, ‘of Church to me? I may as well stay at home, and say my prayers and read my Bible there; a deaf person like me had best at home; it is very fit for those to go who have got good ears, but as mine are fast sealed, I can get no good.’”

Now if you can get no good, then certainly you had best bide at home; it would be labour in vain; let your seat be empty; do not, if such were the case, attempt to go. But this is the question, Are you sure you can get no good? Are you sure that it is useless and profitless for the deaf to go to Church? Are they obeying God’s will by staying in their own homes? Are they let off the duty of worshipping God with His other sons and children in His sanctuary? Can the deaf stay at home *without sin*? That is

the point. We know that it is a sin in others to neglect God's House. Are the deaf free from this act of service? We know that others, when they go in a right spirit and frame of mind, find an especial blessing in the House of Prayer, draw near to God, are strengthened by His Spirit, and come away profited and enriched. Are the deaf unable to share this blessing, or to gain any measure of grace therein?

This, I say, is the point. If it is not a duty of the deaf to go to Church, if it brings no blessing to the deaf, if it is no sin to stay away, then truly you may safely and innocently remain at home. But in my judgment, it *is* a duty for the deaf to go to Church; they lose grace and strength and heavenly help, when they stay away; they commit sin and despise the Lord.

For, first of all, remember when you go to the House of God, *you go to God Himself*; you go not only to hear His Word, or to hear His minister, but you go to Him who gave the Word and sent the minister. The Church is the House of God, where God is, where your heavenly Father is to be found, where your Saviour is present, where the Holy Ghost abides.

You there draw near to God, while He *draws* near to you; you there go to meet your

ABOUT COMING TO CHURCH.

Lord, and there your Lord comes down to you. His ears will hear your voice, though you cannot hear the voice of men, if you go to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Nay, if the Church were empty, if none else would go, it would do you good to go; for God, I repeat, is there. He is there to pardon you, to strengthen you, to bless you. Besides this, is it not our duty to pray together as brethren? And cannot the deaf do this? Though you cannot hear the voices of your fellow-worshippers, you can offer worship with them, and with your heart join in their prayers. God will not refuse the prayer of the deaf; and why should the deaf withhold themselves from God? Why are they to shut themselves out of His holy House? Will God say, "That man is deaf; therefore I will not come near him, I will not bless him, I will not accept his prayers, I will not forgive him."

I beseech you, therefore, to go to the House of God. Pray when the congregation prays; if you can read, read the chapters in the Bible to yourself when the clergyman reads them out to the congregation. Try and meditate upon the things of God, and turn different texts over in your mind when the sermon is going on. Draw near to the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's

Supper, which will refresh you inwardly, and to which the deaf are as earnestly bidden to come as those that hear.

I know that in some respects it is a trial for the deaf to go to Church. It makes you wish to hear, and you feel your deafness more. The service seems to pass on without you ; you seem in some way separated from the rest ; you would like to hear the Psalms, to be profited by the sermon, to keep with the congregation in the prayers. You feel alone and left out. You have some real loss, and the loss comes home to you. I feel for you in all this ; I see what your trial is ; it must be hard to be with the congregation and yet not to join in the service as they do. But still, though you have these trials in Church-going, do not stay away ; the Lord knows your trial ; He has sent you your deafness, and He will reveal Himself to your soul if you only seek His face ; He will pity you, and make up to you by better gifts for that gift of hearing which He has withheld ; His voice will sound in your heart, and if you are earnestly seeking to be saved, He will teach you His truth and He will be with you in His House of Prayer.

HONESTY, OR
PAYING EVERY ONE HIS OWN.

“ I PAY every one his own, Sir,” said a man to me one day, in a tone which made me think that he felt hurt by a remark which I had just made about the duty of being strictly honest. I had not meant to imply that he was not honest, although I had wished to put him upon examining himself in the matter of honesty ; but the expression he used and the eagerness with which he uttered it attracted my attention, and I could not help reflecting in my own mind how much meaning it contained. I contented myself however with replying gravely, “ It is much to say, Robert, that we pay every one his own : more, I suspect, than most of us think for when we say it. It means that we render to all their dues : to God what is due to God, to our neighbour what is due to our neighbour, aye, and to ourselves what is due to ourselves. It is much to say that we pay every one his own.”

I was pleased with my friend's answer. “ Sir,”

he replied, "I was over hasty. Perhaps I said more than was true. But I hope I desire to pay every one his own ; and if in any respects I do not I shall be glad to be taught."

Of course I availed myself of this opening, and went on at once to unfold to him, in such particulars as were most likely to apply to his circumstances, the meaning of the expression he had used.

I will not undertake to relate my exact words, which indeed were interrupted from time to time by his questions and remarks, and formed the chief part of a long conversation rather than one continued speech : but I will set down the substance of what I said, reduced to somewhat more of method than was used when it was spoken ; and I shall be glad if it be as well received by my reader and pondered as thoughtfully as the words I spoke were by Robert Mason. I will only observe, before I begin, that although I had hinted that to pay every one his own means not only to render to our neighbour what is due to our neighbour, but to render to God what is due to God, and to ourselves what is due to ourselves, I did not, on the occasion I refer to, enlarge upon the two latter *heads* ; but confined myself to that one which

gave rise to the conversation in the first instance, the duty of rendering to our neighbour what is due to our neighbour, and even that in a narrowed sense, so as to keep it pretty exactly within the range of what may fairly be understood by the word honesty.

The best method perhaps of considering the subject of honesty, I began, will be to direct our attention mainly to that which is opposite to it, and search out some of the various forms under which dishonesty manifests itself.

1. Of downright theft or robbery, at least where the things unlawfully taken are of any account, I need hardly speak. Every one knows these to be wrong. And no one, one would think, in a Christian country, would justify himself in the practice of them, and rob or steal on principle. Even want, the only excuse which must seem capable of being alleged, with any show of reason, for taking that which belongs to others, is no sufficient excuse. They who bring it forward should consider whether idleness is not the cause of their want ; and whether honest labour might not remove it : or if, which may be the case in some instances at some times, work is really not to be had, whether there are not other and lawful means, in such a country as

this, of obtaining the necessary supply, till such time as they are able to procure it for themselves by their own exertions. To rob or steal is not more to rob man than to distrust God. It requires, no doubt, great faith to believe, when all things seem contrary, but yet the faithful soul will believe, and act upon the belief, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," (Matt. iv. 4 ; Deut. viii. 3,) that is, that God will provide for His servants, even though it be by means which they cannot in any wise foresee, rather than suffer them to want what is necessary for their support.

2. There are those, however, who would shrink from stealing where the property is of considerable value, who yet make no scruple of pilfering little things, a few odd handfuls of corn, a broken rail or two, a little remnant of cloth, a spoonful of tea or a few lumps of sugar now and then, a stray postage stamp, or a sixpence which has dropped out of somebody's pocket without being noticed. Possibly these persons may persuade themselves that there is a difference in principle between the two cases, and that where things are of such trifling value that *the owner will hardly miss them*, or more likely

not miss them at all, there can be no great harm in taking them. Yet in reality there is the same dishonest principle in both. He who pilfers little things would assuredly steal greater, however he may try to make himself believe the contrary, if the opportunity should offer, and there should be a reasonable prospect that he would not be found out; as a matter of fact, most of those who have disgraced themselves by gross acts of stealing, have begun their career by petty pilfering.

3. There are, however, other ways of defrauding on a small scale besides those which have been instanced. Servants or labourers, for example, who would not on any account steal or pilfer their employer's property, will sometimes be guilty without scruple of unfaithfulness in regard to their employer's time, wasting it, it may be, in idleness, or doing their work indolently and without heart, or doing their own work when they ought to be doing their employer's, or withholding their full measure of exertion that they may save their strength for their own purposes. And employers, it must be owned, on the other hand, are sometimes apt to take advantage of circumstances, and to keep back from their servants or labourers a fair and reasonable

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compensation for their work. In both cases there is a plain want of honesty, however men may be kept in countenance by the practice of numbers who are pursuing the same course as themselves. He who wastes his employer's time, or spends it for his own purposes, or withholds from it his strength and energy, does in effect defraud him of that money which he will receive as the wages of labour honestly performed. And he who stints his servants or labourers in their wages, defrauds them of the compensation which is justly due to them in return for the time and labour and skill expended in his behalf. Both forget that they have "a Master in heaven," whose eye is always upon them, and who, while He will severely punish those servants who have forborne to serve their earthly masters "with all good fidelity," will at the same time, as the guardian of the poor, and the defender of the oppressed, take signal vengeance on those masters who have dealt hardly and unjustly by their servants. Hear how the Word of God speaks in each case : " Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers ; but in singleness of heart, fearing God ; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to *the Lord*, and not unto men ; knowing that of

the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven." (Col. iii. 22; iv. 1.)

It is indeed deeply interesting to observe how Scripture applies to the relationships of which I have been speaking the great principle, that the communion which Christians have with each other as fellow members of Christ's body, is the foundation of the duties which they owe to each other. Christianity did not abolish the distinctions which it found, even where those distinctions were vastly greater than they are with us; but it hallowed and endeared the relationships which were the foundations of them. It taught masters to regard their servants, or slaves, as they oftener were, as yet "above servants, brethren beloved." (Philem. 16.) And it taught servants, while they counted even heathen masters "worthy of all honour," not to presume, where any of them had Christian masters, upon the new relationship of brotherhood, into which Christianity had brought them, but rather to serve their masters with double diligence and

fidelity on that very account. (See 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2.)

But I must return from the consideration of that which belongs to particular relationships to that which is of general concern. Let me only remark however, in passing, what I already hinted at when I spoke of paying every man his own, in the first instance, that each particular relationship, as it involves duties to the party or parties with whom it connects us, affords us an opportunity for the exercise of honesty. And he only can in strictness be called honest, who is faithful in the discharge of those duties in every relationship in which he stands to others. A man may be strictly honest, as far as regards the not taking another's property, yet if he is unfaithful as a parent or a child, as a husband, a brother, or a friend, if he is a bad master or a bad servant, a bad minister or a bad parishioner, a bad ruler or a bad subject, he is so far wanting in honesty. And when we consider how wide a range is thus spread before us, we shall probably be disposed to think that what is called "common honesty" is honesty of no very high standard.

4. As might have been expected, there are no *occasions* on which a man's honesty is more

frequently put to the test than in buying and selling, especially when there is no settled rule to fix the price of the articles bought and sold. "As a nail sticketh fast between the joinings of the stones," says the writer of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, "so doth sin stick close between buying and selling." (Ecclus. xxvii. 2.) "It is naught it is naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth;" boasteth, that is, of his bargain, and of his success in beating down the seller, by undervaluing the goods he wished to buy. (Prov. xx. 14.) The world's rule is to buy at the cheapest and sell at the dearest price that can be had: but the rule of strict honesty is, if we have to sell, to ask no more than we believe the article to be fairly worth; if we have to buy, to be willing to give all that we believe it to be fairly worth; and in keeping with this, if there are defects in what we sell, not to conceal them; if mistakes made by the other party, not to take advantage of them.

The other day, Jane Rogers, when buying some sugar, had a sixpence given her in change in mistake for a fourpenny piece. If Jane had been disposed to be dishonest she would have put the sixpence in her pocket, and have said nothing about it, as it was very unlikely that the

shop-keeper would have found out his mistake ; but Jane knew that she would be keeping what was not her own, and therefore she took it back. It is true the temptation in this instance was but a small one, but honesty in little things is, as far as it goes, a guarantee for honesty in great things. I hope, if the mistake had been that of a sovereign for a shilling, instead of a sixpence for a fourpenny piece, Jane would still have acted in the same way.

5. Passing bad money when it is known to be bad is another form of dishonesty. The difference between this and common stealing or cheating, is much the same as that between firing a pistol with a deliberate aim at one particular person, and firing at random amongst a crowd. In the one case we know whom we wrong, in the other, all we know is that we must wrong some one. A man may indeed think it hard if bad money has been paid to him that he should be the loser by it, and not be allowed to pay it to some one else in turn. But if we have been wronged, is that any reason why we should wrong others, and those too, persons who have done us no injury ? If we know the person from whom we received the money, we *may ask him* to take it back, and if he is an

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honest man, he will do so without hesitation, on his being convinced that we received it from him. But otherwise, we must be content to bear our loss. Far better to bear it and keep a good conscience, than to relieve ourselves from it at the expense of wronging some unknown person, who possibly may be far less able to bear it than ourselves, while at the same time we grieve the Holy Spirit whereby we have been sealed, and draw down upon ourselves God's displeasure.

6. There is another form of dishonesty, which, both from its frequency and the recklessness with which it is often practised, deserves to be especially noticed: the withholding the payment of just debts. There are cases, no doubt, in which some unlooked for alteration in a man's circumstances makes it very difficult for him to discharge debts,¹ which, at the time when he contracted them, he had good reason to believe he should be able to pay. Yet, even in these, if a man is honest, he will strain every nerve, and deny himself whatever is not absolutely necessary, that he may obtain the means of paying. To live in idleness, or to indulge one's-self or one's family in superfluities, whether in dress, or in eating and drinking, or the like, while we are keeping those to whom we are indebted out of

their own, and possibly causing them much distress in consequence, is about as heartless a piece of dishonesty as can be imagined. The fine clothes, or whatever else people are vain of, which are purchased under such circumstances, instead of being an ornament are a disgrace. If any thing however can aggravate the matter, and make the dishonesty more disgraceful still, it is when the debt has been contracted without any reasonable prospect, on the part of the person contracting it, of being able to pay. And yet I am afraid this is very far from being an unfrequent case. I am afraid there are some debts, which are contracted without even the intention or the wish to pay, and others, where, though there may be a sort of intention and a sort of wish, yet the hope of having the means of payment, or, in truth, the intention of taking any earnest, serious steps towards obtaining the means, is so vague and indistinct, that in reality they amount to nothing.

The rule which St. Paul gives us about debts is, that we are to "owe no man any thing, but to love one another." (Rom. xiii. 8.) Love is a debt which we must be always owing, because as fast as we pay one debt we contract a new *one*. *The time will never come, let us have*

paid as much as we may in this respect, when we shall cease to owe a debt of love to our brethren and to all men. But as regards debts in the common sense of the word, our course is either to contract none, or, if this cannot altogether be avoided, honestly to pay what we owe with as little delay as possible.

7. When I spoke of debts, I meant the debts which we owe to private persons. But there are debts of another sort, debts which the law has made due to public officers for the use of public bodies. Such are taxes and customs, which the law has made due to the queen for the maintenance of the government and the right ordering and protection of the country ; rates and levies, which the law has made due to the parish officers for the relief of the poor, the keeping of the church in good repair, and other purposes. There are persons who seem to have principle enough to pay the debts they owe to individuals, who yet make no scruple, whenever they have it in their power, of evading these public debts. They will conceal the truth, and make false returns, or if they cannot succeed thus, they will at least give the collectors as much trouble as they can, to make their office as disagreeable to them as possible. Have *such* men ever considered how

expressly the Word of God speaks on the subject? "Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom." (Rom. xiii. 7.) If men think it hard to pay the dues they are called to pay now, when they have in return an equitable government, and a degree of protection under it both for their lives, their liberties and their property, which was never known in ancient times, what would they have thought if they had lived under the government to which the tribute spoken of in the passages just referred to was to be paid? Yet Scripture makes no allowance, admits of no excuse. What is God's is to be paid to God, what is Cæsar's to Cæsar. (Matt. xxii. 21.)

8. Honesty is not confined to actions. A man may be dishonest in words as well as in deeds. And truly one of the greatest wrongs which one man can do another is dishonesty of this description, the defrauding a man of his character and good name. It may injure a man's prospects for life, prevent him obtaining employment, or as good and profitable employment as he might have done otherwise, and so prove equal to many pounds taken out of his pocket; or even if it does not affect him in this respect, it may rob *him of the regard and esteem of his friends, a*

robbery which cannot be estimated by money, and which indeed all the money in the world could not make amends for. And though it is true the chief fault in this case lies with the persons who first set abroad the evil report, yet those who encourage it by making it welcome, and giving a ready belief to it, are not wholly free from blame. If the one sort are like those who coin bad money, the other are like those who pass it without examination, though they have reason enough to suspect it to be bad.

Thus I have mentioned some of the principal forms under which dishonesty manifests itself. I might mention others, but these will be sufficient to shew that when people talk of "paying every one his own," a great deal more is contained in the expression than perhaps they think of when they use it. To pay every one his own, or, in the Apostle's words, to "render to all their dues," is to hold back nothing from another which of right belongs to him; to give to each faithfully and truly the money or other property which is his, to devote to him the time, the labour, the skill, the attention, in one word, whatsoever he can justly claim at our hands; to have a care even of his character and good name, at the least so far as not to wrong him in respect of

them, whether by saying what is not true, or by lightly and without sufficient proof believing an evil report. But indeed to be an honest man, in all the full meaning of the expression, is neither more nor less than to be true and faithful in the discharge of all the duties which we owe to our fellow men. One of our old poets has run the meaning up higher still, so as to include faithfulness in the discharge of our duties to God and to ourselves as well as to our neighbour. If this is stretching honesty beyond its usual meaning, at any rate it is, as I said at the outset, no more than the common expression of "paying every one his own" may fairly be made to bear.

In the mean time, to return to honesty in its narrower and more commonly received sense, let me remind you, that whoever would be a truly honest man, must watch diligently against the causes and occasions of dishonesty. Such are, that I may briefly mention some of them,

1. A covetous, grasping spirit. He who cherishes such a spirit as this will be continually in danger of being driven to dishonest practices to satisfy its cravings. And the root of a covetous, grasping spirit, is a discontented, dissatisfied spirit. Where men are discontented *and dissatisfied* with what they have, they covet

and grasp at what they have not. The Scripture rule is, "Be content with such things as ye have;" (Heb. xiii. 5;) and the Scripture admonition is, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke xii. 15.) "And the Scripture warning is, "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26.) Of all the hard-earned money, truly none is so hardly earned as that which is earned at the expense of a good conscience, and at the risk of grieving the Holy Spirit, and forfeiting heaven and heavenly happiness.

2. Another frequent cause of dishonesty is idleness. Where men are too idle to work for an honest livelihood they are driven to seek a livelihood by dishonest means. And though in many cases even these require some degree of exertion both of mind and body, yet there is an excitement connected with the employment of them, and with the risk attending them, which seems to supply that stimulus, which honest labour in its ordinary course has not. The Apostle's direction in this respect is a very remarkable one, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his

hands the thing which is good," for what purpose? That he may provide a maintenance for himself and his family? Yes, and for something more, beyond this, "that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. iv. 28.)

3. Wastefulness is another frequent cause of dishonesty. People bring themselves to want in this way, and then they are led to have recourse to dishonest practices to support themselves. It is the same sort of thing where people live systematically beyond their means, spending more upon themselves, their eating and drinking, their dress, or whatsoever else they choose to indulge themselves in, than their earnings or their incomes allow. This is the most fruitful source of that particular kind of dishonesty which consists in neglecting to pay debts. If men have an right principle and right feeling, they will rather deny themselves in every thing, short of what is absolutely necessary, than procure what they desire at such a cost. How can a person take pleasure in fine clothes, or fine furniture, which have neither been paid for nor are likely to be paid for? Or in luxurious living, the expense of which is to be borne by others? Vanity and sensuality are bad enough in themselves, but they are doubly

bad when they are indulged in at other men's charge.

These then are some of the very frequent causes and occasions of dishonesty, and he who would keep himself honest must watch against these and such as these. He must watch against a covetous, grasping spirit, against a discontented, dissatisfied disposition, against a wish to make a show, to dress better, live more expensively than befits his station or his means ; against idleness, wastefulness, and the like, all of which, sooner or later, and by steps more or less direct, are sure to bring on dishonest practices of one kind or other. But above all he must remember that honesty, such as God for Christ's sake will own and accept, is a Christian grace, and is to be wrought in the heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit ; and therefore he must seek it from that source, praying God, for Christ's sake, to forgive him, if in any instances his conscience accuses him of dishonesty in his past life, giving proof of his sincerity, by making restitution and satisfaction to those whom he has wronged, to the utmost of his power, and striving for the time to come to yield a ready obedience to the good motions of the Holy

HONESTY, OR PAYING EVERY ONE HIS OWN.

Spirit, and especially to fulfil that great commandment which is the surest preservative against every kind of wrong to our fellow men ;
“Owe no man any thing but to love one another.”

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

JANE SMITH'S MARRIAGE.

“THERE is Jane! I do think I hear her coming now;” exclaimed Sally Smith. “Will you go, father, and open the door for her?” Poor Sally Smith was an invalid, and had left her place to come home and be nursed, so she remained in her easy chair which one of the neighbours had kindly lent her, whilst her father went to the door. Just as he opened it the sound of voices speaking rather softly were heard, but “good night, Jane;” “good night, Bob Wright,” were all the words that those inside the cottage were able to distinguish. A look of sorrow could be seen in a moment to darken their faces, but before a word had been said, Jane had crossed the little garden and entered the house. It was Sunday evening and supper was over, but being one of summer’s longest and brightest days, there was still a good deal of light remaining. After a few remarks about *the lateness* of the hour, to which

Jane did not choose to make any reply, something to eat was offered her, and she sat down to the little side-table, apparently in no very good humour either with herself or her family. After her supper old Smith was preparing to read to his wife and children the explanation of the Collect for the day, according to his usual Sunday custom, out of a book given him nearly twenty years ago by a former vicar of the parish. The book was called "James on the Collects." But scarcely had the old man got his spectacles out of the capacious pocket [of his best waistcoat, when his daughter Jane said that she wished to go to bed, for she felt very tired. Jane was her father's youngest and favourite child, his "pet lamb," as he would sometimes fondly, perhaps foolishly, call her; and he had made up his mind not to spoil the peace of the Lord's day of rest by saying any thing disagreeable to her, but to put off what he had to say till the next day. However he could not help observing, in answer to her complaint of fatigue, "that she had no business to tire herself with walking out along with that Bob Wright."

"That Bob Wright!" repeated she angrily; and in a very short time the old man's spectacles *were put back* again into his pocket, and *instead*

of a Sunday evening's reading, a Sunday evening's quarrel took place, for the first time in his life, in William Smith's house. Jane was pert and very self-willed, and her father, however indulgent, was somewhat hot in his temper, and felt all the more angry from the provocation having been given by a child whom he so tenderly, nay partially, loved. In vain did the mother and poor Sally try to soften down the angry feelings of both parties, and they soon found that by meddling at all they only made bad matters worse. Besides, however sorry she was to see her husband so much provoked and so extremely angry, yet Mrs. Smith herself too well knew that there was just occasion given for parental rebuke, and indeed she had herself more than once begged her husband to speak seriously to his daughter, having found all her own advice entirely disregarded.

A sharp contention between those who dearly love one another is indeed a sad affair, and I shall not repeat all the words that passed between the father and his daughter on that unhappy evening. Both in a certain degree felt that they had done wrong, and this feeling very likely added to the fierceness of the quarrel. Old Smith knew that he had always been too

indulgent to Jane, and had often forbore from speaking to her, when he would have instantly reproved his sons or his other daughter; and now that he was beginning in earnest to reap what he had sown, he was extremely vexed and angry. As for Jane, she was clearly in the wrong altogether, she had gone out to Church in the afternoon, her father and mother having been there in the morning; but instead of attending divine service she had been walking about with Bob Wright, an acquaintance against whose company her mother had already warned her more than once. A neighbour who on his way to Church had met these two walking in an opposite direction, and had noticed how anxiously they seemed to shun his observation, had thought it his duty to come round by Smith's cottage and tell Jane's father of the fact. Six o'clock, seven o'clock, eight o'clock came, but she did not return, and this delay, unpardonable in a girl of only nineteen years of age, had made them all very uneasy. And it was this feeling of uneasiness which made old Smith unable to keep his resolution of putting off till the Monday the serious reproof which he felt it to be his duty to give to his darling, but wilful child. At *first*, she was very fierce at being spoken to, and

then she became sulky and obstinate, but when she found out how much they already knew of her doings that evening, she owned that she had been to tea with Sukey Wright, Bob's mother, and added she bitterly, "Oh, what a nice delightful day it would have been, if I had not such an unkind father and mother, and such a miserable home to come to!"

Now who was Bob Wright? And why had the old Smiths so great an objection to their daughter keeping company with him? If I tell you who he was, you will soon see why they did not like his acquaintance. Bob Wright was really not a very bad man in the eyes of the world. When he was a boy, he thoroughly hated school and used to laugh at those who liked it, so he got away from it as soon as he could, and forgot what little he had learned there; thus when he was grown up, he could not even read, and was sadly ignorant in far more important matters than reading and writing are. However, he was tolerably industrious and sober, and had a very good character for honesty. But his life was a very careless one, more like the life of one of the brutes that perish than like the life of one who knows himself to be "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the

kingdom of heaven." He rarely went to Church, never regularly ; and when there he would sit slouching about, as if he had no more to do with the service, and was no more concerned with prayer and thanksgiving, and the Word of God, than the very bench upon which he was so perseveringly sitting ! But this was not all there was against him. Bob Wright had "got himself into a scrape," as the world calls it ; that is, in the language of the Bible, he had committed a grievous sin. It was only a few months since he had been brought before the magistrates, and compelled to pay eighteen-pence a week towards the support of a child of which he was shewn to be the father. And, even now, he was still keeping company with his companion in sin, and it was said that he had thoughts of marrying her. No wonder, therefore, that old Smith and his wife were most anxious to keep their child from forming an acquaintance with Bob Wright ! Nor were they very desirous of her becoming intimate with old Sukey, who seemed much disposed to court her society, for Sukey was not what is called a nice old woman, though I do not wish, as the phrase is, to pick holes in her character unnecessarily.

That Sunday evening, so bright, so soft, so

JANE SMITH'S MARRIAGE.

peaceful, as it seemed, while they stood beneath the sweet honey-suckle at their cottage door and listened to the bells ringing a merry peal after evening service, was, nevertheless, to old Smith and his wife, the beginning of a long course of trouble and disappointment. In vain did her mother advise and reprove her, in vain was her father displeased with her, in vain did her poor suffering sister entreat her to take warning and to seek some better guide than her own self-will and her own unruly passions. Jane would listen to nobody. She would have her own way. And she did have it. But what were the consequences?

It was very nearly a twelvemonth afterwards, when one beautiful morning early in June, several persons were seen issuing forth from Smith's cottage, over the porch of which the lovely honey-suckle was now once more flinging in rich luxuriance its pliant branches, and scattering around its summer sweets. Among the two or three persons seen coming from under this bower was one very young woman, pale and care-worn, but still pretty, whose appearance was much more suitable to the character of a wife than to that of a bride. It was Jane Smith on her way to Church to be married to

Bob Wright. She leaned upon the arm of her elder brother, who was to give her away, since her father refused to be present at a wedding which was rather a consequence of sin than a prevention of it. They walked slowly and mournfully down the village, not at all with the appearance of a wedding party, till they reached the bottom of a little hill, where there was a bridge across the brook, and where they could see the old Church tower rising up above the houses that were built on the opposite rising ground. There was no other way to Church but across this bridge. When the party reached the last house in the village on their side of the river, Jane could not restrain her feelings, but burst into a flood of tears. Within that door which they were then passing was poor Esther King lying in a deep decline, brought on chiefly by distress and anxiety arising from her own sin and disgrace, and from Bob's cruel treatment of her and forsaking her for another, whom he really liked better than her, as she plainly saw. After passing the bridge and drying her tears, Jane proceeded slowly up the little hill, which seemed to her now longer and steeper than it ever used to be, and which she could scarcely *believe to be* the same hill that she had often so

swiftly and joyously run up, when she thought herself late for Church or school. When they were nearly at the top of it, they could see Bob Wright and his brother waiting for them by the churchyard gate, and in a few minutes more they were listening to the service appointed for solemnizing holy matrimony, but not alas! with those intense yet peaceful happy feelings of pious awe most deeply mingled with natural affection, which, at that touching hour, are the precious portion of those only who "keep themselves undefiled members of Christ's body." At last the service and the long process of filling up the two register books of marriages were finished, and as they left the churchyard the bells according to ancient custom struck up a lively peal. "Poor Esther!" thought Jane, as she walked by her husband's side and recollected her old play-fellow, and the sort of prior claim which she had to the very place now occupied by herself; "Poor Esther! oh how will she be able to bear those bells, or how can I ever get past that house while they are ringing!" However she was soon relieved of this anxiety.

Ill luck generally attends such unseemly weddings in some way or another, but this day's misfortune proved rather a lucky one. Two out

of the five bell-ropes, which were very old, suddenly broke, and there was an end of the wedding peal before the party had reached the bottom of the hill. They passed Esther's cottage in silence, and though afterwards the party became more cheerful, and the day less painful, yet, notwithstanding the unclouded brightness of the sky from the dawn to the sunset, certainly in Jane's case it was by no means true, that "happy is the bride whom the sun shines upon."

We must now go onwards a few years in Jane Wright's life.

Who is that dismal-looking pale woman, stalking about in the plantation with an apron full of something she has been stooping to pick up? Her face is old and care-worn, and if I were to seek a resemblance for it, I should say it conveys the same impression of despair and disappointment as the face of nature does after a very late and very sharp spring-frost. That poor creature is Jane Wright. Her mother is dead, her only sister, Sally, is also dead; her father has grown old and almost heart-broken, for she and her husband have been a continual trouble to him. Without a penny to begin the world with, without any notions whatever of managing, with

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a little family, now, of four helpless children, Jane was always under a temptation to beg or borrow, or by some means or other to get something to help her out of present trouble. Besides, there was the poor little orphan (for Esther King had been long since dead) to provide for, and that took up eighteen-pence a week, no mean portion of a labourer's earnings. Happily Bob was blest with very good health and had constant work; and to do him justice, whatever he earned was brought home for the support of his wife and family. Indeed, though heart-burnings and quarrels would not uncommonly arise, and who could be surprised that they should under all the circumstances, still Wright made a much better and kinder husband than most young women might expect who begin as badly as Jane did. Matters might certainly have been worse with her, yet poor Jane could sometimes scarcely see how this was possible. Such shifts and contrivances to get a little clothing, or even a bit of bread for the children in winter sometimes! Then their rent (which was very easy, for they lived under the squire, who kept all his cottages in his own hands) was never punctually paid, and more than once they had been threatened to be removed by the squire, who took care to have

none but good cottages at low rents, and therefore thought himself quite justified in being particular about punctual payment. To meet these and other expenses of keeping house, to pay for the doctor two or three times, and often to pay up two or three months that were backward in the village clothing club, poor old Smith had given his daughter many a shilling, and had lent her (never to see his money again) many more. Still, with all that was done, she was always behindhand, always fretful, always discontented.

Wright's mother, old Sukey, was now living with her son and his wife, and though her allowance from the parish and her help in taking care of the children while Jane went out to field-work were very serviceable, yet her coming to live with them had its evils. It is not often that a daughter-in-law and a mother-in-law get on very agreeably in the same house; indeed, considering how much they are thrown together, especially in a cottage, this is scarcely to be expected from the weakness of human nature. But a worse evil than this arose from Sukey's taking up her abode with them. The poor old woman, who, like her son, had her good qualities, was (most likely for want of proper training in *her youth*) sadly given to be cunning, and to

pick any little odds and ends that fell in her way, without ever proceeding to very great acts of dishonesty. This weakness of the mother was a snare to her daughter-in-law, and sometimes the only way which Jane could see of providing herself with what she really wanted and was sadly pressed for, was by trying to put in practice some of the clever contrivances of which she had heard the old woman occasionally speaking.

The circumstances of the parish in which Jane had been born, and where she had always lived, (for her fond father had indulged her dislike of going out to service,) were somewhat peculiar. The whole of it belonged to one gentleman, who always lived there, and whose care and delight it was to see the labouring population on his estate comfortable, orderly, religious, and happy. No one could drive through his property without being struck with the air of neatness and comfort visible both in the people and in their cottages, nor without admiring the order and fruitfulness of their large gardens. And no one but the squire himself knew the pains, the expense, and the trouble that it had cost to produce the present state of things. One mode in which this had been effected, was, by being very strict

and particular, and the people often thought it hard, and wonderful that they were not allowed to do, "every man what was right in his own eyes," just as in some neighbouring parishes. Still, upon the whole, the cottagers saw and valued the good arrangements of their landlord; and he, in turn, was gratified by their orderly habits and general good conduct.

One part of the parish was of little value being a cold spot of heath lately enclosed; and here, in the winter, when work became scarce, the squire often employed a good many hands in digging and planting. A crop of potatoes was set in the newly broken ground for the first year or two, and while the hoeing of these was beneficial to the young trees, the produce would help towards paying for the expense of labour in trenching and planting. The plantations were mostly in a very retired part of the parish, and for the last year or two, just about harvest-time, a great many potatoes had been stolen and taken away. The squire was justly angry at this, since every labouring man in the parish had a very large garden of his own and constant employment provided for him. The people were fairly warned that the first person who might be *caught stealing* in the plantations would be

made an example and severely punished. That person was no other than Jane Wright.

Alas for mismanagement! Under some pressing want of the moment, Jane had parted in the spring with the potatoes intended to be planted in the garden; she had then borrowed half a crown of her father towards buying some others, and had actually saved a few shillings herself, but all this money went towards a new pair of shoes, the old pair having for "want of a stitch in time" positively come to pieces six months sooner than they ought, and before even they were entirely paid for. Thus it ended in the garden being but half cropped, and of the few wretched potatoes that were put in, not more than two thirds ever made their appearance. Hence arose a sad scarcity of sauce, (as vegetables are called in Norfolk,) and at length the result was the actual commission of robbery.

Poor old Smith! judge what his feelings were, when he was told that the first thief ever known in his family had been detected, and that she was his favourite daughter. There was no doubt about the matter. The steward in riding round the fields had seen at a distance a tall figure among the new plantations, and fastening his horse to a gate had gone softly

round on the other side of the hedge till he came right upon Jane holding up her apron full of potatoes. At first she said that she had only stooped down to pick up a few which she saw lying on the ground, but the quantity that had been lately missing, and the marks of the newly disturbed ground, as well as her own awkwardness and hesitation in telling her story, bore witness to the contrary. After some further search, a considerable quantity of potatoes was found heaped up behind a large bunch of furze in the plantation, evidently ready to be conveyed away. And in the course of a few minutes, Jane, who had always been brought up to hate dishonesty, trickery, and lies, freely confessed her guilt, pleading only in excuse her excessive poverty. It is a hard task indeed, and most creditable to those who perform it well, to make the weekly earnings of a labourer support his family comfortably. But this may be done, and often is done, by care and management, without which it would be impossible to make any wages suffice, as we often see proved in the cases of deep distress and poverty occurring in the families of artisans who earn five times as much as a day-labourer.

The squire was glad that at least one of the

thieves had been discovered, and though he was sorry for the guilty person, he was not a man to change his determination that a severe example should be made of her. After consulting with his steward, he resolved not to send her to prison for a theft of so small value, since that would be ruining her character and taking her away from her husband and infant family, but preferred another mode of proceeding which he had used once or twice before, and with good success.

It was settled that after due notice Bob and his wife should be removed from their cottage and from the parish, and should thus for a time lose the many privileges belonging to those who were living on one of the best-regulated estates in the county, if not in the kingdom. When this determination was made known to Bob, he was very angry indeed. Whether he or his mother, or both of them, knew any thing about the potatoe-stealing affair, was never clearly proved. But he stoutly denied all knowledge of it ; and with that hardness and want of respect, with which men almost always treat a wife who has disgraced herself before marriage, he said ; " Why does not the squire take the law of her ? if she has stolen them, let her go to prison ; but

why should I be punished by being turned out of my cottage?" It was in vain to remind him how often the wife suffers for the husband's misdeeds. He might have recollected how dearly his wife and children were still paying for his own sin, on account of which eighteen-pence a week was regularly taken away from the fund that provided their daily bread. But he was obstinate, and declared that he would never leave his house till he was driven from it.

Month after month passed by, and several warnings were given him, that he must provide himself with another home, an affair of some difficulty in a neighbourhood where cottages were rather scarce. Nothing, however, was done beyond going up to the hall and begging the squire to let them stay where they were. This he positively told them he could not do, without either reducing his threatened punishment to mere empty words, or else unfairly making a difference between parties whom it was his wish and his duty to treat all alike. "Besides," added he, "there is Tom Deeks, as steady and prudent a man as any in the parish, who has been married, I think, these two years, and has had ever since that to live three miles from his *work*. *The cottage is promised to him.*"

At length, the day appointed for the Wrights to leave drew near, but a little before the time they begged the steward as a special favour to give them two or three weeks more. This was done. A second time the same favour was asked, and it was granted a second time. Bob was foolish and impudent enough to "try it on again," as he called it; but he received a very short answer; "you must go on such a day, or I shall have to turn you out."

They did not go on that day, and they were turned out of their cottage. People will talk about their neighbours, whether it be in a village or in a town; and this was too interesting an event not to be discussed. The young, the thoughtless and the ill-disposed, were inclined to think Bob's case a hard one, while those that were better able to judge and more likely to judge rightly, were disposed to pity him and his wife in much the same way as one would pity a man who had sown nothing but thistles in the spring and had nothing but thistles to reap at harvest-time! For a day or two I know not what became of the Wrights. John Deeks was put in possession of the cottage, and they seemed to have disappeared. But about the third day afterwards matters took a new turn.

"Who are those people in the churchyard? And what business has that donkey and cart there?" said the vicar to his man John, who was the parish-clerk also.

"It is Bob Wright and his wife, sir; poor things! They have taken up to the church porch, now that they are turned out of their cottage."

"What do you mean, John?" replied the vicar.

"Mean, sir? Why, I hope no offence, but what should I mean but what I say? Only I forget, sir, that you are not a Norfolk man, and may be, you don't know our ways. Don't the poor houseless creatures ever take to the church porch in your country, sir?"

"Never," was the immediate reply; and old John was instantly in his glory, for he liked nothing better than the pleasure of enlightening one who was not a "native" upon the manners, customs, phrases, or other peculiar excellencies of his own dear old Norfolk.

It appeared from the good man's account that every parishioner has a right to make the church porch his temporary home, when he can find a home no where else. And in proof of this, John *would have told* half a dozen stories of the right

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having been claimed in various parishes in his own time, and in his father's and grandfather's days. However, after two of these histories had been fairly related, the vicar interrupted him by returning to present facts.

"So then Bob Wright has actually taken up his quarters in the church porch."

"He has indeed, sir; and you would not be so cruel as to go and disturb the poor creatures there, because you don't happen to have any such nice old custom in your country?"

The vicar felt half convinced by old John's arguments, such as they were, and could not deny, that, however it might work practically, there was something very nice and beautiful, and even instructive, in the old notion of God's House of Prayer rising up, like a beacon, in the midst of a parish, and stretching out its wings to be a home and a refuge to all who dwelt within its borders and might happen to stand in need of these. But without stopping to have any further conversation with his servant, the vicar hastened to the churchyard. There a strange sight presented itself to his eyes. The ample porch of the fine old Norfolk Church was enclosed by a piece of coarse old carpet or drugget suspended in the very front, which, but for a

couple of strong sticks placed purposely to prop it up, would have come down to the ground and covered the whole of the entrance, including the wooden gates. Beneath this curtain half-raised, was to be seen the interior of the porch, which had by this time assumed the appearance of a small and crowded cottage-bedroom. One bed, supported partly by the stone bench and partly by a couple of wooden chairs, occupied the western side of the porch, and on the opposite bench were signs of intended sleeping places for the two biggest children, protected by an old table, so placed as to keep them from falling out of bed. Various articles of furniture, large and small, but almost all of them shabby and miserable, filled whatever space was left, and entirely blocked up all approach to the Church door. In the middle of this scene of misery and disorder, Jane was to be seen busily arranging her things as well as she could, and trying to put uppermost whatever was likely to be most wanted. She was too much engaged with her own occupations and sad thoughts to notice the vicar, who stood opposite to the porch, watching with surprise a sight such as he had never before seen, nor was ever very likely to see again. *After some time he heard a sound behind him,*

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and turning round perceived Bob Wright leading the donkey and cart towards the gate of the churchyard. Bob stopped and made his bow, and a conversation soon followed in which Jane occasionally put in a word or two.

The vicar's remonstrances against the unfitness of the place for the homely purpose to which it was being applied, were all entirely thrown away. And in reply to these, so many arguments were brought about the sacredness of the Church, as a place of refuge for those in distress, the old and long-prevailing custom, the claim of every one, however humble, to a right of having a share in the privileges of the parish Church, that it was very puzzling to know what answer to make in return. The spirit of these arguments, urged with great boldness and not without some indignation at the mere notion of their being opposed, pleased the vicar better than the particular application which was made of them to the case before him.

After some conversation, when he found that they had not even a shed provided to receive themselves and their family, and recollected that his own barn was at present quite full of corn; when he saw too that the day was beginning to close in, and that the sky in the south-west

appeared very strongly to threaten a storm. On an autumnal night, he began to give way; following his good feelings rather than his judgment, the vicar allowed them to stay where they were for one night. But he little thought of what he was doing. Ten whole days was the Church porch occupied as a home and sleeping place by the houseless family, and it appeared very much as if Bob was reckoning upon making this scheme the means of procuring for himself a cottage in the parish again. His answer to all arguments that were used to persuade him to go, was, "find me a place in the parish and I will go directly."

One Sunday occurred during the time he was living in the porch, and then, to do him justice, it was astonishing how well his goods were cleared away, and how little inconvenience was to the attendants at Church. Indeed, for the great brown curtain, which was taken up over the front of the porch, because it cost too much trouble to put up to allow of its being taken down again, and for the various articles huddled together and covered up in the north side of the tower, there were no traces of the purpose to which the porch had been applied the night before, and for which

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was again to be used that night. Still it was impossible to suffer this arrangement to continue over another Sunday. But Saturday had a second time arrived, and the church-warden and vicar had been forced to threaten to call in the help of the police force, before Bob Wright could be dislodged from his home in the churchyard.

At last away he went, with all his goods and chattels, as the lawyers say, but not till he had bargained with the steward to be permitted to remove for a month or two to a sort of outhouse, belonging to another cottage, which, however wretched compared with all the squire's cottages, was a great improvement upon the porch, and quite as good as many of the houses which in other parishes are often let by their poor and greedy owners at double the rent charged by the squire. Here again, when the time came for the outhouse to be pulled down to make some improvements which had been long intended, Bob stuck hard to his old plan, and it was not without difficulty, though with less trouble than before, that he was fairly removed from the parish.

Poor Bob! as he walked to and from his work, a daily distance of some miles, and thought over and over again how he was to manage

to keep his wife and family, and pay his eighteen-pence a week, and twice as much rent as ever he had paid before, he could not help fancying that the squire must have a spite against him. Little did he dream with what reluctance all this had been done, as a matter of duty and discipline, for the benefit and example of all the other tenants on the estate, and not from the slightest feeling of spite to Bob Wright. And poor Jane too! I may say, that if she deserved to suffer more, she certainly did suffer more than even her husband did. Nor was it the least of her increased trials that her husband was now more bitter against her than ever he used to be, and she felt sometimes half choked with tears, when she was told in the midst of their trouble and poverty, that "it was all her fault," and thought within herself how much of it really was so.

But adversity teaches us many good lessons, and often when things are at the very worst, they are nearest to mending. Exactly a year had passed from the time of their being turned out of their cottage, when Jane, while hanging out some clothes to dry, espied the squire on horseback coming along the road that led to the village where she was then living. She instantly *went into the house*, for she did not wish to

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see him, and presently, when she heard the steps of a horse coming slowly along the village street, she could not help crying. The horse stopped ; she wiped away her tears and listened, and in a minute or two a knock was heard at the door, and the squire with his riding-whip in his hand was soon in the cottage. I need not repeat the conversation that followed. Jane was so excited that she scarcely knew what she said or did. But she was not too much excited to know what the squire said, and she was almost beside herself with joy, when her husband came home, tired and weary in the evening, and she burst upon him with the good news, " Oh Bob, the squire has been here to-day, and has spoken so kindly to me ; and he will let us go home again next week, if we please. He says he has made an example of us, which was all he ever wanted to do, and he hopes our troubles will have been a lesson to ourselves, and now poor old John Fiske's cottage is empty since his death, and we may have it ! Thank God ! "

They were soon back again in their native village, and have now as good a cottage as any in the parish, and ever since they have conducted themselves so well and orderly, and managed matters so much better than ever they before did,

that I hope I may venture to apply to :
Wright and his wife the words of Holy Sc
ture : " It is good for them that they have b
in trouble."

*A WORD IN DUE SEASON TO THE
PARENTS OF HIS FLOCK.*

BY A VILLAGE PASTOR.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

You see those happy and smiling faces around your fire-side. Whose are they? Your children's, your own dear children's. You heartily love your children. To be sure you do. They are your own flesh and blood, bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh. You are very anxious about their welfare. You do well to be anxious about it, for they have immortal souls. When you brought them into the world your heavenly Father breathed into them a living soul. That soul will never cease to be. It will live for ever. My dear friends, it is concerning these immortal beings, these children you love so dearly, that I wish to speak to you. I am very anxious about them as well as you. I am, I say, very anxious about them, but for another reason than that which makes you anxious. You are anxious because they are your own children; I

am anxious because they are a part of my flock—because the charge of their immortal souls has been intrusted to me. I have been appointed to that office in this parish. Christ has bid me feed His lambs as well as His sheep in this fold. If you consider this, you will not think it strange that I should be desirous to say a few words to you concerning the welfare of their souls. Let me earnestly beg you to listen to the words of one who has so great an interest in their well-being. But you may be inclined to say, Why should you wish to speak to us about our children? What occasion can there be for it? Do we not love them dearly? Are we not as anxious for their welfare as you can be? No doubt you do love them. No doubt you think you are anxious for their welfare; but there is something that makes me think, that, though some may be anxious for their welfare, all are not, or at least are not anxious for their eternal welfare. This it is which makes me wish to speak to you on the subject. Now why is it that I am led to think that all do not care for their children's immortal welfare? It is because so many seem to live without God in the world—seem to have no regard for the solemn vow they made in their *baptism*—seem to make no effort to lead one

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moment of their lives according to that holy beginning. How many have grieved the Holy Spirit ! Yea, and how many, alas, seem to have quenched the Spirit, that Holy Spirit by which they were once sealed as God's children to the day of redemption. Now whose fault can this be ? There's the question. Parents, is it yours ? Is it through neglect or bad training that these children of God, who were once washed and justified and cleansed by the precious blood of Christ, have again become guilty before God ? Is it through your fault that there is a dark and dismal spot, the stain of sin, upon their baptismal robe ? Are not some of you afraid to ask yourselves that question ? Parents, I say, why is it that your children so many times grow up so unlike Christians ? Is it your fault, or is it not ? Have you trained them up in the way they should go, or have you not ? I much fear that in too many cases too great a share of the guilt does indeed lie at your door. You have never really considered that your children have immortal souls—that they are God's children as well as yours, and intrusted to your care to be brought up as His children should be. You have cherished their bodies ; you have perhaps spared no time to train them up to get their living in

the world ; but you have never trained them up as heirs of God in another world should be trained. As for their souls, they might as well have been without souls for any real care or concern you have shewed for them.

It may be indeed you have sent them to school, to the week-day and to the Sunday school. Let me ask, what did you send them to school for? Come, answer me the question honestly. Was it for the good of their souls? Did you say to yourselves, God has given us children ; we know that they are His gift, for children and the fruit of the womb are an heritage and gift that cometh of the Lord. I humbly thank Him that He has made me so happy. What reward shall I give unto the Lord for this great blessing wherewith He hath blessed me? I will train up my children for His service. They are indeed, a blessing, but it is a blessing that brings with it great responsibilities. Much, how very much ! depends upon me, whether these my dear children shall be really and truly His faithful servants—whether they shall be happy for ever, or miserable for ever. O, how greatly do I need help to bring them up well—in the nurture and admonition of the *Lord* ! I will daily seek for help in prayer,

I will beg the continual aid of the Holy Spirit. I will never cease to remember them in my prayers.

After Divine Service on the Lord's day, I will not go about seeking for pleasure, as it is called. No; I will not neglect my children upon any *selfish* pretence whatever; but I will stay at home, and instruct my beloved ones in the ways of salvation. I will speak to them of the wonderful works of the Lord, and of His great mercies in Christ. I will teach them diligently concerning them. "I will talk of them when I sit in mine house, and when I walk by the way, and when I lie down, and when I rise up." That shall be *my* pleasure, on the Lord's day; yea, and on every day.

I will also seek for help among my brethren: I will send my children to school, to a person better instructed than I am. There they will learn, with God's blessing, to walk in the good and right way. There they will be under the eye of their spiritual Pastor, who will come and see that they are fed with the spiritual food suited to their age. There they will learn to love and praise God. There they will be made to understand what God has done for their souls: how He has blessed them in sending His

Son to die for them. And if they are called out to daily labour to earn their bread with the sweat of their brow, still I will send them to the Sunday School—(a blessing be upon his head who first thought of establishing Sunday Schools!!)—I will certainly send them to the Sunday School. There they will keep up a knowledge of what they have learned before. But, above all, there will they be led regularly to the House of God. Yes, I will send them to the Sunday School! for there they will be more and more confirmed in what is good. There they will learn to glorify God more and more, and to look upon God's House as the gate of heaven.

Did you say all this? Alas! alas! I fear some have never said any thing of the kind! You have said, I will send my children to school. There they will learn to read and write and cast accounts, and so get on in the world. Now, observe, I do not say you were wrong in sending them to school for this purpose. No. You were wrong in thinking *so much* of this, and in forgetting the better part.

You were not altogether wrong, because, as your children were born to live in the world, it was right to have them taught how they were to *use the world*. It was right to have them taught

to make the best use of the talent given them by God, and how to improve that talent. But this, alas ! has been your only thought ; and, therefore, you were wrong.

Now I will tell you why I think some of you did not send your children to school that they might learn to love and please God. To learn to please God, they should be obedient and regular in their attendance. But you have at times shewn that you are very careless about their obedience, and about their regular attendance. Your spiritual pastor also, and the master or mistress of the school, have found it necessary to correct your children ; and what have you done ? You have taken your children's part against them. Instead of thanking them, and blessing God who put it into their minds to correct their wrong dispositions, you have been angry, and have thought your children hardly used. Thus you have actually encouraged them in rebellion and disobedience. Could you call this loving your children ? Could you, when you did this, have a regard for their souls ? Was not his teaching them to follow the example of Adam and Eve, who by disobedience brought sin and death into the world ? Was this the likely way to make them *increase*, like Jesus, in wisdom as

well as in stature, and in favour with God and man? A little time for thought will convince you that it was not—that it was rather the way to make them children of the wicked one.

Now do, then, think seriously upon what has been said. Do be persuaded to see your error, and amend it. Do, I pray you, attend to what the Bible teaches, and correct your children be-times; for, if you suffer them to grow up in habits of disobedience, they will most likely continue disobedient to the day of their deaths, and die children of wrath after all. O! do be persuaded, then, to work with your Spiritual Pastor; to strengthen the hands of the Master or Mistress of the School. It cannot be a pleasure to them to punish your children. They can have no thought but for their good. If you trust them to their care, be *wise enough* to think thus. If you cannot trust them to correct your children, surely it is folly to put them under their care. May God give you wisdom and understanding to see this in the right light!

I will tell you another reason why I think some of you are careless of your children's eternal welfare.

You commit open sin in their presence. You *curse and swear* before them. You are not

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strictly honest, and they see it. You do your earthly masters' work with eye-service, and are negligent when their backs are turned. Your children know it. And if their teachers tell them that it is wicked to do such things, they think within themselves that it cannot be so, because you, their beloved parents, do it. Thus they learn to do as you do. Perhaps you come home disguised with liquor. They see it; and, though they read in the New Testament that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God, they will not believe that a parent they love can lose his soul for ever. Thus they learn to explain away the words. They learn also to walk in your steps, and perhaps die in a state of drunkenness. You neglect your Church. Your children notice it, and say—"Surely, our parents cannot be *serious* when they bid us go to Church, otherwise they would go to Church themselves."

Now, if you conduct yourselves in this way, and know that your children observe you, how can you be said to care for their souls? You do not care for your own souls, that is certain. But that is not what I am speaking of. I am endeavouring to shew that, whatever professions of love you may make for your children, they are empty and vain. They must be empty and

vain, or you would act very differently in your children's presence.

O, parents ! again and again I entreat you, beware how you set your children a bad example. Even a heathen could tell you that they learn ten times more from what you do than from what you say. If you do set them a bad example, and lead them astray, depend upon it you will have the loss of their souls to answer for as well as your own. You must be prepared to meet with a severer judgment. If your children have learned to sin from your example—I repeat it—if you have not rather dissuaded them from sin, how can you expect to be spared ? When the Lord comes to require an account of what He has intrusted to you, how can you hope to be delivered from the wrath to come ? I speak to those parents, above all, who are not content with neglecting their children, but actually set them against those who are striving to direct them in the good and right way. How can you expect to escape the damnation of hell ? If Jesus encouraged parents to bring their children to Him, what will He, at the judgment-day, say to those parents who have actually kept them from Him ? O, what will He say to those parents ! It is, indeed, an awful thought !

I would have concluded with these words ; but

I do not like to leave you speaking only of the terrors of the Lord. No, my friends, I will adopt a different method. I will make a last trial, and endeavour to persuade you to do your duty by your children, by reminding you of the blessings that attend those who bring them up to lead a holy and religious life. Not to tell, then, of the mercies of Christ in another world, of that unspeakable blessing which awaits those who bring up their children as a people prepared for the Lord, is there no reward to God-fearing parents in this life? Is there no comfort in having obedient and dutiful children? Is there no pleasure in beholding the foot quick to run at your word, and the hand ready to act—the eye that sees almost before you see—the heart and will that outstrip your very thoughts—that when you are in trouble watch you with anxious and tearful eye, and try to repay you for the cares you have once undergone for them by every instance of affection and love—that would lighten your sorrows by shewing, in every way they can, how truly they partake in them? Is there no comfort in knowing that you have brought up your children to be such children? But, above every other consideration that can be named, let me speak of the hour of death, and of the day of judgment! Is it nothing *to have your sick bed surrounded by*

those who can respond to the prayers of the Church with an heartfelt Amen, who can receive with you the last pledges of your dying Saviour's love, and have that perfect communion with you therein, which none but the saints of God can enjoy? Is it nothing to die in the arms of such children? And, after death! at that awful hour when you shall be summoned to meet your Judge, will it be nothing to be able to say, Here I am, Lord, and the children whom Thou hast given me? Will it be nothing to be received into the glories of heaven, *together* with those you have so dearly loved on earth?

My dear friends, I entreat you, if there be any consolation, any comfort in such reflections, I entreat you to think on these things. And now commending you to Him and to the word of His grace, who is able to do exceeding abundantly for you above all that you can ask or think—who, if you will ask Him, will by His Spirit “enable you to bring up your children in His faith and fear;” commending you to Him,

I remain,

Your faithful Friend,

A VILLAGE PASTOR.

THE MODERN MARTYR.

A TRUE TALE.

ONE very painful characteristic of the great difference which there exists between ancient and modern Christianity, is, the apathy and unconcern which people feel respecting their brethren in the faith. When we remember that all Christians are members of one great family, whose Head is Christ, and whose most prominent rule is that if one suffer all should suffer with him, it is difficult to account for our forgetfulness or blindness in this respect, except by supposition that our zeal is less earnest and charity less warm than in other days. How frequently one is doomed to hear well-meaning people talk as if the Gospel were confined within the limits of this island, and as if there were no Christians in the world except ourselves. We never enquire about them or sympathize with them, and therefore many of us are perhaps even ignorant of their very existence. The other day a large number of our brethren at Aleppo were

cruelly massacred on account of their religion by the infidel Turks, and yet this lamentable event excited little notice. There was a time in England, when every Christian bosom would have been filled with indignant emotion, and when rich and noble men would have arisen and girded on their swords to go to the rescue of their poor oppressed brethren. True, their zeal was perhaps ill regulated in those times, but still they had zeal and Christian sympathy too, of which we, alas, have but little.

But there are many perhaps who will ask what these reflections have to do with the subject I am writing on. Have a little patience and you shall see. You have all heard of martyrs, of those holy men who gave up their lives rather than deny Christ and the Christian religion, and who chose rather to undergo cruel mockings and scourgings than to forsake their Redeemer and their Lord. We read with wonder and amazement of their heroic constancy, and of their stedfast and unconquerable fortitude in the midst of torments, the very recital of which appal the heart with terror. And then we are apt to close the book with a species of thankfulness that we do not live in such barbarous times, *and that whatever might have been the cruelties*

ractised in past days, there are no martyrs at present. Now this feeling proves what I said before, our ignorance respecting our fellow Christians in distant lands. Until very lately, all of our brethren in the east were liable to be dragged away from their homes, and were ill treated or perhaps martyred by the bigoted Turks on account of their religion. Many suffered in this manner, but in most instances their fate excited little attention among their fellow Christians in Europe. We had so long forgotten the ties of ancient brotherhood, that we almost ceased to remember that there were Christians in the east.

It is almost thirty years ago since the Christians of Greece took up arms to drive out their oppressors the Turks from their fertile and beautiful country. Their struggle was ultimately successful, but it is not of them that I am now about to speak. A great many Christians of the Greek nation resided at Constantinople, presided over by their patriarch, an aged man, whose now-white beard and venerable aspect caused even the infidel Mohammedans to treat him with respect. It was of course natural that he should feel sympathy with his brethren and children in the faith rather than with their cruel

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oppressors, but there was no proof that he had ever taken any share in their enterprize. However, his innocence was no protection, for a mob of Turks, incited by their Mollahs or religious teachers, broke into his palace, dragged him and the principal Greek clergy through the streets, and finally put them to a cruel and shameful death. They then attacked the Greeks generally, and massacred great numbers, offering them, however, the option of denying their Saviour. The chief cities of the empire followed the example of the capital, and a multitude of Christians were thus inhumanly massacred.

During this disastrous period there lived near the city of Smyrna an aged Greek matron, whose name was Anna Stratioti. She was a widow, having many years before lost her husband, a wealthy merchant of Constantinople, who had left her heiress of all his property, with the guardianship of their young son, who was quite a child at the period of his father's death. The money left amounted to a large sum, but her rights were called in question by a Mohammedan merchant named Hassan Chelebi, who professed to have been a creditor of the deceased. When he presented his account to the widow she *examined* her husband's papers, but found that

He had paid the amount claimed many years ago. She therefore refused to pay it again, upon which he summoned her before the Cadi or Mohammedan judge. In the meantime he began to consider how he could accomplish his wicked purpose of defrauding the poor widow and her fatherless child, and unfortunately the means were within his reach. At Constantinople there existed and still exists, a body of men who gain their livelihood by acting as false witnesses. It is well known to the judges that these men are perjurers, and that their testimony is all a fabrication, but as they are Mohammedans their evidence is rarely disputed. Hassan Chelebi hired two of these men, and having instructed them what to say, he produced them before the judge, and they swore that the deceased merchant had acknowledged in their hearing, two days before his death, that he was indebted to Hassan the amount claimed. The widow was at first too astonished to make any reply to this falsehood, but fortunately her brother was present, and he offered his own testimony and that of several Christian merchants, to the effect that the debt had been paid in their presence. But the judge remarked that according to their law, the word of a Christian was of no avail against

that of a Mohammedan, and therefore he gave judgment in favour of the Turkish merchant, and the unfortunate widow was thus plundered of nearly the half of her property. She knew that she could not expect redress from any Mohammedan court, and therefore quietly submitted to the injustice of the infidel, and withdrew with her young son to Smyrna, where she possessed influential and wealthy connections.

Smyrna is mentioned in Revelations, chap. ii., as one of the seven Churches to which St. John addressed those warnings so replete with useful instruction and so applicable to Christians in all ages. It is still a beautiful city, but the eye of a devout follower of Jesus is shocked to behold, perhaps for the first time, the lofty minarets and spacious domes which announce the triumph of the creed of the false prophet over the Gospel and the Church. In the suburbs are many beautiful villages surrounded by plantations of the fig-tree, the fruit of which is exported in great quantities, and forms the principal article of Smyrniote commerce.

The widow hired a small house in the outskirts of the town, part of which she gave up to her brother, a papas or clergyman of the Greek Church. He was much older than his sister,

and had been in his youth a great traveller and a diligent student, having resided some time at a Russian college. He was moreover a zealous and pious priest, and it was therefore with great satisfaction that the widow confided to his care the education of her young son Johannes. The youth proved not unworthy of his uncle Daniel, and the venerable ecclesiastic had the satisfaction to remark in him the germ of an excellent and Christian character.

Years passed away, and Johannes had nearly reached his twentieth year, when tidings of strange and mournful import reached the ears of the Greeks of Smyrna. It was said that their countrymen had overcome the infidels, and that the cross was once more triumphant in the beautiful land of Greece. But at the same time news arrived that the Turks had massacred the patriarch and his clergy, and that they might soon expect to be visited with severe persecution. At the latter part of the intelligence many turned away incredulously, for they knew that the Greek community of Smyrna had always been a body of peaceful traders, and had taken no part in the struggle of their countrymen against the Turks. There were however those who thought otherwise, and among these

were papas Daniel and his pupil, who, followed by a large number of their countrymen, repaired to the bishop's house.

The residence of this prelate was very inferior to the palaces of his western brethren; it was a mean edifice of wood, erected in a straggling and irregular way around the four sides of a court, in one of which was an arched recess where sat the bishop on a sofa raised about a foot from the ground. Beside him stood a deacon bearing the episcopal staff tipped with silver, and around him sat the principal clergy of his diocese. As the numerous visitors approached, they each advanced to kiss the bishop's hand and to receive his blessing, after which they took their seats and joined in the conversation with what we should perhaps consider extreme familiarity, still preserving, however, the most marked deference for the high spiritual dignity of their host.

Papas Daniel was the chief speaker, and he briefly set before the bishop the nature of the dangers to which they were exposed, and the best means of avoiding them. He recommended that those who were able should leave the city, for a while at least, and that all should endeavour to keep themselves as much as possible *within doors*. The sight of the Greek dress

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would at such a time excite the fury of the mob, and might lead them to massacre the whole Christian community. He urged upon them moreover the propriety of seeking the protection of the European consuls, but here his speech was interrupted by loud clamours and knocks at the outer door. The trembling Greeks regarded each other with looks of affright, but no one stirred. In a few minutes the door yielded to the violence of the blows showered upon it from without, and Ismael Aga, a noted Turkish debauchee, made his appearance in the court followed by a mob of desperadoes, who had been inflaming their Mohammedan zeal by copious draughts of wine and arrack.

“How is this ye Christian dogs,” yelled the leader, his brutal features convulsed with rage and intoxication; “do ye sneak hither like timid and cowardly foxes to plot against our lord the Sultan and our holy prophets. Miserable slaves, you are afraid to meet us in the field, and endeavour by your wretched cunning to circumvent us by stratagem. Come out, thou grey-headed father of mischief,” he exclaimed, addressing the bishop; “come forth and answer to the Cadi for thy treasons and those of these dogs thy sons.”

The bishop attempted to speak, but his defence of himself and his people was drowned by the shouts of the mob. "Down with the misbelievers, down with the infidels," exclaimed the infuriated Turks; "hang up the bishop and put all the rest to the sword." At length one of the intruders darted forward, caught the aged man by the beard and dragged him towards the door. Naturally irritated at the sight of this indignity, Johannes seized the miscreant and endeavoured to force him to relinquish his hold. But his interposition was in vain. He himself was surrounded, buffeted, and would have been torn in pieces by the mob but for the appearance of some Turkish soldiers, who rescued him wounded and bleeding from his persecutors, and carried him off to prison to answer before the judge the grievous charge of striking a Mussulman, a crime which was by Mohammedan law punished with death.

The interior of a Turkish prison presents the most appalling scenes of misery and woe. In one dilapidated room of small dimensions, where the heat was suffocating, a number of half-naked wretches covered with heavy chains, were seated on heaps of filthy straw. Their squalid appearance and dull stupified looks betrayed the un-

mitigated wretchedness of those who have ceased to hope. Yet their Mohammedan hatred of Christianity still remained unabated, and as Johannes passed by them, more than one raised himself from his straw to curse and spit upon the Christian dog.

The heart of the youthful prisoner sank within him as he gazed upon the wretchedness around him, so different from his comfortable home, and the thousand little kindnesses with which the tender care of his mother had surrounded him. And that mother, what would she feel when his situation was made known to her. The thought was too grievous to bear, and Johannes cast himself on the ground and wept.

While he was indulging his grief, a hand pressed gently upon his shoulder, and looking up he beheld his uncle papas Daniel. The old man's grief could hardly be restrained, and throwing himself on his nephew's neck he wept aloud. But he soon mastered his emotion, and sitting down he began to address the youthful prisoner on the necessity for firmness and confidence in God in his present trouble. He told him that he would probably be offered his life on the condition of renouncing the faith of Christ, and he conjured him not to be induced by a weak

and cowardly love of this present life to incur the displeasure of God and lose his immortal soul.

Johannes listened to his venerable relative with serious attention, and assured him that he would do his utmost to stand firm. The good priest reminded him that he could perform nothing without the aid of God's grace, and promised to return and administer to him the Holy Sacrament of Christ's body and blood that very evening. Johannes thanked him warmly for his fatherly care and affection, and just at that moment the officers came to conduct him before the judge. The trial was very short, and was interrupted from time to time by the shouts of the infuriated mob, who exclaimed incessantly, "death to the infidel, death to the Christian dog." The judge did little more than pronounce the sentence, which was, that the prisoner should be beheaded the next morning at day-break, and he then commanded him to be taken away.

In the evening papas Daniel arrived at the prison accompanied by Anna Stratioti, whose affliction at the sight of her son may readily be imagined. She was ready to make any sacrifice to save his life, but she had been informed that he could only be spared by becoming an apostate from the faith of his fathers.

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The priest although deeply moved endeavoured to console the unhappy mother. He told her of the holy women who in past times had cheerfully surrendered their children to torments and death for the sake of God. He reminded her of the noble Jewish mother mentioned in the book of Maccabees, who had stood by unshrinking to witness the martyrdom of her seven sons ; and of the holy matron of Antioch who was present when her young child was scourged to death, encouraging him all the time to suffer manfully, and to lay hold boldly of the martyr's crown. He told her that the heathen mothers of their dear native Greece used to charge their children to die rather than dishonour their country's cause, and should a Christian mother do less? He then proceeded to administer the holy rite, and as soon as possible led away his poor afflicted sister from the prison.

Johannes was very much affected by what had passed, and no wonder that at such a trying hour some thought of abandoning in appearance the Christian faith crossed his mind. He knew that some had professed themselves Mohammedans to save their lives, and had afterwards left the land of the infidels and resumed in some foreign country the open profession of Chris-

tianity, and something whispered him where was the harm of a falsehood told unwillingly to save one's life. He would not in reality become a Mohammedan, and after all the blame would rest with those whose tyranny and cruelty had rendered such dissimulation necessary. But he thought of the words of the Gospel which his uncle had just read, "Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in Heaven;" and he succeeded by God's grace in repelling the temptation from him.

Another trial, however, awaited him. An Albanian officer had seen the weeping mother passing along the court of the prison, and was moved by her distress. Moreover the Albanians are themselves Greeks, and this man looked upon the prisoner as a countryman whom perhaps he could rescue from the rigour of an unjust death. He went to the judge and obtained from him a promise that if Johannes would adopt the Moslem faith, his life should be safe. He hurried to the prison with the news, and tried every argument in his power to induce the youth to make a profession of Mohammedanism, but in vain. He offered that a public *renunciation* of Christianity should be dispensed

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with, but Johannes civilly, yet firmly rejected his offers, and desired to be left alone. The Albanian departed, half admiring the prisoner's courage and half angry at his obstinacy.

The next morning the young Greek was led forth to die. His uncle was with him before daybreak, and exhorted him to endure manfully to the end. The martyr pressed the hand of his aged relative. "Do not weep for me, dear uncle," he said, "I am going to Jesus. Take care of my poor mother, and tell her we shall soon meet again in the presence of the holy saints and angels."

He laid his head upon the block, the axe descended, and the aged priest unable any longer to control his emotions, threw himself upon the body and burst into an agony of grief.

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**THE SCRIPTURE COMFORT TO THE
PERSECUTED.**

BLESSED are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

MORNING AND EVENING FAMILY PRAYERS.

MORNING PRAYER.

LET us bless God who has watched over us in the night past, and brought us in safety to the beginning of a new day.

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed; because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning.”—Lam. iii. 22, 23.

PSALM.

I WILL magnify Thee, O God, my King : and I will praise Thy Name for ever and ever.

Every day will I give thanks unto Thee : and praise Thy Name for ever and ever.

The day is Thine and the night is Thine : Thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

I laid me down and slept, and rose up again : for the Lord sustained me.

O hearken Thou unto the voice of my calling, my King, and my God : for unto Thee will I make my prayer.

MORNING AND EVENING

O let me hear Thy loving-kindness bet
in the morning, for in Thee is my trust :
Thou me the way that I should walk in, for
up my soul unto Thee.

Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth T
for Thou art my God : let Thy loving Spirit
me forth into the land of righteousness.

O let my mouth be filled with Thy pr
that I may sing of Thy glory and honour all
day long.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and
shall be : world without end. Amen.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowe
Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy
be done in earth, As it is in Heaven. Giv
this day our daily bread. And forgive us our
passes, As we forgive them that trespass ag
us. And lead us not into temptation ; Bul
liver us from evil : For 'Thine is the kingdom,
power, and the glory, For ever and ever. A

FAMILY PRAYERS.

O Lord, deal not with us after our sins,
Neither reward us after our iniquities.

BE merciful unto us, O Lord, for in Thee do we put our trust: O be not greatly displeased at us, and remember not our transgressions: but graciously look down upon us at this time, and deliver us from all our enemies: for Thou art our God, and we are Thy people, the work of Thy hands, who call upon Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O ALMIGHTY Father, great God of all the world, who dwellest in the light to which no man can approach; in Thy presence there is no night, in the light of Thy countenance there is perpetual day; we Thy servants, whom Thou hast preserved this night, bless and glorify Thee for the protection of Thy good Providence, and we humbly pray Thee, that this day and all our days may be holy and peaceable. Send Thy Holy Spirit to be the Guide of our way, and Guard of our soul and body, and grant that all our life long we may live in Thy faith and fear, until we come to Thine everlasting kingdom, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

O MERCIFUL God, bless Thy Holy Church throughout all the world; bless this parti-

cular Church in which we live ; make it and all the members of it sound in faith and holy in life, that they may serve Thee and Thou bless them, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O ALMIGHTY God and most merciful Father, we commend to Thee this day and every day ourselves and all that belong to us, all who pray for us and all who have at any time asked our prayers for them ; incline Thine ear unto us and hear us, O Lord, and remember all who at this time with us implore Thy Name, and save them by Thy mighty power, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

GLORY be to Thee, O Lord, for all Thy gifts of providence and of grace, for our creation after Thy image, our redemption by the precious blood of Thy dear Son, and our sanctification by Thy Good Spirit. We bless thee for all Thy mercies to us here on earth, and the hope Thou hast given us of glory hereafter in Heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end. Amen.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

FAMILY PRAYERS.

EVENING PRAYER.

LET us beg Almighty God to grant unto us a quiet night, and such seasonable rest as may fit us for our daily task.

“I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God.”—Ezek. xxxiv. 15.

“When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.”—Prov. iii. 24.

PSALM.

I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills : from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh even from the Lord : who hath made Heaven and earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved : and He that keepeth thee will not sleep.

Behold He that keepeth Israel : shall neither slumber nor sleep.

I will lay me down in peace and take my rest : for it is Thou, Lord, only that makest me dwell in safety.

Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as the

MORNING AND EVENING

incense : and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son : and to the Holy Ghost ;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be ; world without end. Amen.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us,

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, As it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; But deliver us from evil : For Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

V. Lord, let Thy mercy lighten upon us,

R. As our trust is in Thee.

V. Thou hast been our refuge,

R. From one generation to another.

V. O Lord, be merciful unto us,

R. For we have sinned against Thee.

FAMILY PRAYERS.

V. Lord, we flee unto Thee, teach us to do Thy will,

R. For Thou art our God.

O LORD God, Judge of Heaven and earth, whose eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good; we confess to Thee the sins, which if we would, we cannot hide from Thee. This day and every day we have sinned against Thee; and yet Thy mercy is greater than our sin, and Thou in pity leadest us to repentance. Grant unto us pardon and forgiveness of all our offences; strengthen us in every good work, and bring us to Thine everlasting kingdom, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

O LORD our God, who didst bow the Heavens and come down for the salvation of the human race, look upon Thy servants and Thine inheritance. To Thee the dreadful and merciful Judge Thy people bow down their heads, and incline their necks, not expecting any help from man, but waiting for Thy mercy, and hoping for Thy salvation: preserve them at all times, and especially this present evening, and the approaching night, from every enemy, from every adverse action of the devil, from vain imaginations, and from evil thoughts.

R. O Lord Jesu Christ, hear us and help us for Thy Name's sake.

O LORD the Keeper of Israel, who neither slumberest nor sleepest, be pleased in Thy mercy to watch over us this night, and make us ever mindful of the time when we shall lie down in the dust. Preserve us while waking and defend us while sleeping, that when we are awake we may watch with Christ, and when we sleep we may rest in peace. Amen.

O LORD Jesu Christ, Shepherd and Bishop of the Church, bless all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons with truth of doctrine and innocence of life. Especially we pray Thee to bless the Bishop of this diocese, and the Clergy of this parish, that their ministry may serve to Thy honour and glory, and to the salvation of the souls committed to their charge. Amen.

O HEAVENLY King, be gracious to the kingdoms of the earth, and all who bear rule in them, especially Thy servant our Queen.

Bless Thy Holy Catholic Church, and especially that part of it which Thou hast graciously planted amongst us, and us whom Thou hast been pleased to call into it, that we may serve Thee in peace and godliness.

FAMILY PRAYERS.

Have compassion on all who are in sickness or sorrow, in doubt or perplexity.

Be gracious to all whom Thou hast given us to be near and dear unto us; all who love us, and are specially loved by us. Bless them, O Lord, and all who pray for us or desire our prayers for them, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O ALMIGHTY Lord God, who only art holy, we bless Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee; Thou broughtest us out of nothing, and when by our disobedience we were fallen, Thou didst raise us up again, that Thou mightest bring us to Heaven, and give us an inheritance in Thy future kingdom. For these and all other Thy mercies, whether known to us or unknown, manifest or hidden, we give thanks to Thee and to Thy only-begotten Son, and to Thy Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS.

BEFORE COMMUNION.

O LORD our God, Thou art supreme in Heaven and in earth; Thou only art holy, and dwellest with the holy. We call upon Thee who alone art good and favourable to our prayers; look down upon us sinners and Thine unprofitable servants; cleanse our souls and hearts from the conscience of evil; strengthen us by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may stand before Thy Holy altar innocently and unblameably, and that we and all who partake with us Thy holy mysteries may be made meet for Thy heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ. Amen.

AFTER COMMUNION.

O LORD, who dost bless those who bless Thee, and sanctifiest those who put their trust in Thee; we give Thee thanks because Thou hast vouchsafed to make us partakers of Thy holy mysteries, and we pray Thee to preserve us by Thy holiness all our days, that we may learn *Thy righteousness* and abide in Thy love,

OCCASIONAL PRAYERS,

through Jesus Christ Thy Son, our Lord and Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and Thy Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

FOR SUNDAY MORNING.

O LORD God, who dwellest on high, and yet hearest the prayers of us Thy servants upon earth. Fit our hearts to worship Thee in Thy House. Pour into them the spirit of grace and supplication, the spirit of wisdom and understanding. Preserve us from wandering thoughts and all irreverence of mind and body, that our prayers may, with those of Thy whole Church, come up unto Thee with acceptance, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

FOR SUNDAY EVENING.

ACCCEPT, O Lord, the praises, and return a gracious answer to the prayers of Thy Church, which have been offered unto Thee this day. And of Thine infinite goodness grant to us, and to all Thy people every where, that whatsoever good instructions we have learned from Thy word, we may carefully remember and diligently follow: and whatever good de-

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sires Thou hast put into any of our hearts
humbly beg that by the assistance of Thy
we may bring the same to good effect
may daily increase in the knowledge and
of Thee our God, and of Thy Son Jesus
our Lord. Amen.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

*MORNING AND EVENING HYMNS
FOR A YOUNG PERSON.*

A MORNING HYMN FOR A YOUNG PERSON.

THE Sun is on his way,
The lark is up on high,
And bright and fair the new-born day
Laughs from the morning sky.

I too would laugh and sing,
But not with earth-born mirth,
And run Thy way, O heavenly King,
Glad of my glorious birth.

Thy child,—by grace Thy child,—
I praise Thee, bounteous Lord !
Praise Thee for slumber soft and mild,
Praise Thee for light restor'd ;

Praise Thee for heavenly light
Pour'd on a world forlorn,
For glimpses, through the grave's drear night,
Of the everlasting morn ;

Praise Thee for sin forgiven,
And for Thy Spirit's grace,
Praise Thee for Him who came from Heaven
That we might see Thy face ;

A MORNING HYMN FOR A YOUNG PERSON.

Praise Thee for friends on earth,
Thy bounteous gifts to me,
My mother's love, my father's worth,
My sister's infant glee.

Lord, keep me in Thy fear
Throughout the livelong day :
Teach me with awe Thy voice to hear,
And, hearing, to obey.

Let my first years be thine ;
Be thine my latest breath ;
So shall my face, like Stephen's, shine,
A sunset bright, in death.

To Thee all praise be given,
Thou who art God alone,
Creator, Spirit sent from Heaven,
And Saviour,—Three in One.

AN EVENING HYMN FOR A YOUNG PERSON.

THE Sun hath sunk to rest,
And darkness shrouds the air :
Lord, listen to Thy child's request,
And hear my Evening prayer.

Forgive whate'er of ill
Thy watchful eye hath seen,
In word, in work, in thought, in will,
In temper, and in mien.

To grow as Jesus grew,
To choose the better part,
Teach me. Thy likeness clear and true
Print on my life and heart.

Let blessings from above
Rest on my parents dear ;
Fill my sweet sister's breast with love,
My brother's with Thy fear^a.

^a Or thus, if the case required the alteration,
" My own with holy fear."

AN EVENING HYMN FOR A YOUNG PERSON.

Lord, lay Thy gracious hand
 Upon my youthful head ;
Let angels keep, by Thy command,
 Their watch around my bed.

To Thee all praise be given,
 Thou, who art God alone,
Creator, Spirit sent from Heaven,
 And Saviour,—Three in One.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

***“NEVER MIND: WE ARE ALL GOING
TO THE SAME PLACE.”***

AND why not by the same road? If half-a-dozen of your neighbours were setting out together for some distant town, would you not think them very foolish if they chose six different paths? You would feel sure that five of them must, to say the least of it, be giving themselves more trouble than there was any occasion for. Would you not join with the rest of their friends in saying, “You must be very foolish; there can be but one straight road to a place: five of you must be going, more or less, out of the way?” Would you think much the better of their wisdom, if they cry out with one voice, “Never mind: we are all going to the same place.”

And yet, my dear friends, is not this the very plan that you are pursuing in a matter far more important; in your journey toward the heavenly Jerusalem? The ministers placed over you by God, urge you to unite in travelling to heaven by one path: and this is the answer you give them, “Never mind: we are all going to the same place.” This is the very reason, the strongest of all reasons, why you should go by one road; *&c*

we were intending to travel to different places, it would be a good reason for our choosing different paths: but what can be so contrary to all reason when our aim is to reach the same point.

You are, perhaps, ready to say to me; "Yes, yes, we see; you wish to make your own party larger; we can't trust what you say." But you can trust, fully trust to what God's Holy Word says? Looking up to Him then, reverently, for His blessing, take down your Bible, and turn to the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel. There you will find our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, just as He was about to depart out of the world to His Father, offering up a prayer for His disciples, praying that when they should be left alone, God would keep them from evil. Then our Lord proceeds even to pray for us; in the twentieth verse He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." And what is it that Christ asks for us? That we all may be one, one in this world; "As Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me." Here you see our Blessed Saviour Himself praying that all His disciples might be one. And just mark

TO THE SAME PLACE.

why He prays for this; that the world, that is, the ungodly, may know that the Father sent Him. Look about you now; here you see a body of men, professing to be disciples of Christ, contending for one thing; there another sect contending for just the opposite, while envy, and anger, and evil speaking are mixed up with their contentions. Do you really think that this is the kind of agreement our Saviour prayed for? Does it bear the mark of that "wisdom that is from above," which "is first pure, then peaceable?" (St. James iii. 17.) Can it ever yield the fruit of that agreement which Christ asked? In other words, can it ever teach the ungodly that Christ came forth from a God of love, from the great Author of peace, and Lover of concord? Don't you think, now, honestly, that the world would see this much better, if professing Christians were but "one body," (Eph. iv. 4,) had but "one faith," (Eph. iv. 5,) and were "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment?" (1 Cor. i. 10.) The Epistles of St. Paul shew that he always bore in mind his heavenly Master's prayer. When he heard that there were divisions among the Corinthians, though these had not reached to any thing like the length of our divisions, yet the Apostle was

greatly concerned for them. Directed by the Spirit of God, he says to them, "It hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul ; and I of Apollos ; and I of Cephas ; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided ? Was Paul crucified for you ? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul ?" (1 Cor. i. 11—13.)

My dear friends, I would put these words to your consciences. Read the passages that I have named to you ; compare them with these, 1 Cor. iii. 3 ; xii. 12, 13 ; Eph. iv. 1—6 ; Col. iii. 15. Meditate on them ; pray over them. You are not afraid of the truth, surely ?

Yet I cannot close here. If you have carefully read, and devoutly prayed over these passages, I must naturally expect you to ask ; "Which is the way of unity ? Where is the path in which we are to meet ; the straight and well-beaten road along which we are to walk together ?" I need hardly say to you, that this straight road, wherever it is to be found, cannot be a new road ; for Christ more than 1800 years ago came to mark it out for men. It cannot then possibly be found among any of the dissenting bodies in this land.

The chief of these sects dates the birth of its "founder" but 150 years ago; and for the rest, they have all struck out their paths within the last 300 years. Each sect contends indeed, that their path is the straight one, but a moment's reflection tells you that no new road, no road formed 1500 years after the death of Christ, the Founder of the Christian religion, can be the direct one. Christ it was, Who brought life and immortality to light; and straightway He sent forth His Apostles, divinely inspired, to guide the feet of men into the direct path that leads to these. The Apostles formed by the guidance of the Spirit the disciples who were converted to the Christian faith into one body, which is called in Scripture by that wonderful and blessed name, "the body of Christ." As they went into different parts, this one fellowship, this one body of Christian men, was daily increased; multitudes were added to the Church; they all trod but one way; and when any rose up and sought to make other ways, and to separate themselves from the one body, and to turn aside from the one way, they were rebuked by the Apostles. Though the one Church, like one army, was divided into different companies, some at Corinth, some at Rome, some at Ephesus, some at Colosse, yet

they all were but one army after all ; they all had but one Head, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Here, in England, men in due time were converted to the faith, and were baptized ; they had their own Bishops, and Priests, and Deacons, sent by their Divine Head to guide them in the one true way. And, from that time to this, this Church of England has been a true part of this body of Christ moving along the one path.

Turn your eyes now to the Church of England. In her you may see a road as old as the times of the Apostles, and such as it was in apostolic times, straight, plain, and safe ; while the light of the Scriptures is freely to be had, to cheer you in the hour of darkness and sorrow. This is the good old way. By you it may have been lightly esteemed, but many among your forefathers have walked in it with their God ; and rejoiced in its security ; and finally, blessed Him for its straightness. Whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, I point to this road, the Church of England, as the one on which we are bound to meet ; along this we should walk as brethren, “endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Pray that God may give you an understanding mind and a heart ready to do His whole will.

TO THE SAME PLACE.

My first and most earnest wish is to see you concerned about the salvation of your souls, and my second wish is to see you willing and anxious to keep all the commandments of God, although some of them may go, as I really am much afraid they do, greatly against your present practice. It is my earnest prayer that we should be, indeed, all seeking the same place, and that as men of sense, as true and sound Christians, we should consult our own welfare and peace, and the world's conversion, by all walking in the same road.

Why should we differ? Why should we stand aloof one from another? Why should we be as strangers when we have one Father in Heaven? Why should we not draw near to each other, and love one another, and pray together, and become fellow-worshippers, and walk in the house of God as friends, and take sweet counsel together as brethren in Christ? Surely to the worldly and the unbelieving it must be a sad spectacle to see us all split into so many parties and sects. It must make them distrust that which they should believe; it must make them doubt whether there is any such thing as Christian truth, when we are all disputing about it. And how our divisions must puzzle

and amaze the heathen ! It must hinder them from accepting a religion which seems to be so much disputed about ; they may well say, " If you Christians, who speak so highly of your religion, will first agree among yourselves, and shew us one way, then we will listen to you ; but now you come to us with many different doctrines, and try to lead us into many different ways, though you speak, it is true, of travelling to one place."

Oh ! it is a grievous thing to see so many ways in that one religion which God has given us ; it is grievous to see neighbours, men living in the same village, or the same town, or the same street, though Christians, never meeting together in Christ's Name all their lives, never praying together, never " with one mind and one mouth " glorifying God. Let us try to end our differences. You who have gone from the Church return to her again. Do not keep apart from " the old paths ; " unite yourselves once more to that old body from which you separated yourselves ; as you made the separation, so do you return to us. Let us be one again ; let us remember our Saviour's prayer ; let us *act* as if we remembered it.

DAILY COMMON PRAYER.

WE all believe that in Holy Scripture God Himself is ever speaking to the sons of men. We take the Bible as our great possession; we bless God that He has given us such a light to our path and such a lantern to our feet. The Bible is in every man's hand, and ought to be the guide of every man's life.

Now if you open the most precious portion of it, I mean the holy Gospels, you will there find among other accounts of our blessed Saviour's earthly course, that He was wont, whenever He was in Jerusalem, to go to the Temple *every day*. Thus in the 22nd chapter of St. Luke it is said, "When I was daily with you in the Temple, ye stretched forth no hands against Me." He was *daily* in the House of Prayer. With this fact in the Gospels, this plain fact that our Saviour went up to the House of Prayer to offer prayer not on Sabbaths only but on week-days too, I ask you as a plain straightforward man

· gifted with good common sense, what is the of this fact to you and me, to all of us at present day? why is it set down? why mentioned at all in Scripture? what lesson to teach? We know that all which our Sav did on earth is not made known; for, as Apostle says, if all were written "the w itself would not contain the books that shoul written." While this of course heightens value of all that has been written, so the ticular fact of which I am speaking is pre upon us as one of deep importance, of concern.

So then, I ask you again, why are we that our Lord went daily to the House Prayer? If He is our Example in all thi our Guide, our perfect Pattern, we must s be meant in this, as in other points, to do He did, to follow His steps, to go up dai possible, to the House of Prayer, to pray gether as well on week-days as on the Le day. Is not this the plain lesson that is ta us from this act of our blessed Lord? What is the use of it? what else can we draw from what else can we learn?

It is true that many people will call yo *formalist* for going to Church on week-days;

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hear people condemning it as something formal, or useless, or not fitted to these times, and not required of us. But I again fix my eyes on this single verse. "When I was daily with you in the Temple;" and though all the world were to cry out and condemn daily prayer in Church, the daily hearing of God's Word, this text, this Word of God, this passage of the Bible has in my ears a clearer and louder voice. Did our Lord mean us to follow His steps? If so, did He lead the way to a formal or a useless act?

Of course we may make Church-going a form, whether on week-days or on Sundays; but if we are to follow our Saviour into the Temple daily, He means us to follow Him not only in the outward but in the inward act; that is, to go up and pray in spirit and in truth, to pray fervently, to pray earnestly, and in the beautiful language of the Psalmist to "pour forth" our soul in prayer. It would not be a following of our Lord simply to walk into the Church on a week-day, and mutter a quantity of words, but it would be a following of our Lord to go thither and with heart and soul to give life to the words we utter.

But it will make the matter clearer still, if we look and see how the Apostles, the best followers

of our Lord, understood this His act. If found them neglecting daily prayer, never going up on week-days to the Temple, then we should have a warrant for never going to Church week-days ourselves. But what is the case regards the Apostles? What view did they of our Saviour's attendance in the Temple? In the 2nd chapter of the Acts we find the Apostles after our Lord's Ascension are spoken of as "continuing *daily* with one accord in the Temple." This is an important passage. It decides the question; it shews us that those who best knew the mind of Christ, who walked with Him, and heard His words, and saw His acts, and had the most of His Spirit, followed Him in His daily attendance at the Temple. As He went thither when He was in Jerusalem, so after His departure they also went when they were in Jerusalem.

Only put these two passages side by side, only weigh them with a teachable and sensible mind, without prejudice; only see what our blessed Saviour really did, and what His dear and beloved Apostles did. Surely the truth in this case gives no uncertain sound. Every teachable and earnest disciple of this present time cannot behold his Saviour daily in

DAILY COMMON PRAYER.

Temple, and His Apostles daily in the Temple, without feeling that he also, to the utmost of his power, should do the same, and on week-days seek the Lord in His holy House. Who can lift up his voice against daily prayer in the House of God, when these texts look him in the face? Who can condemn the opening of Churches for daily prayer while the Bible contains these texts? It is a perilous thing so to speak against it, for it looks like a fighting against God, a condemnation of the conduct of our Lord Himself, and of that lesson which by His conduct He designed to teach.

I only ask you fairly to say whether these passages of the New Testament do not teach us that it is a holy, an edifying, a Christian act to go to the House of God, if it be opened for week-day service, supposing that we do not go in a formal way to offer the mere form of worship, but with a soul earnestly seeking of God the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake, and the gracious assistances of the Holy Ghost.

It is true that we may not be able to go every day throughout the year. We may have reasonable hindrances, and not be able to do quite what we would wish. It is impossible for a clergyman to make the hour of service suit

every body. But still there are some persons such as widows, men too old for work, recovering from sickness and not strong enough for work, men out of work, and others who have some leisure time in the day, who might bend their hours to the hours of Church.

those who are engaged in busy life might sometimes so manage the day, as to find time or time for frequently attending the week-day services of the Church. They might snatch an hour now and then, either in the morning or evening some days in the week. And how refreshing it were, in the midst of the cares and temptations of busy life to draw into the calm tranquil holy place where God is, there to make confession of sins, to remember death and judgment to come, to consider the vanity of all earthly things, to seek divine grace in earnest prayer, to be might not be overcharged with the cares of the world, there to hear the Word of God which calls us away from worldly things. When we have much to do, we are apt to shorten and hurry over our private prayers, and thus in our little prayer we have only little power to resist the temptations of the world. Now it is a great benefit of joining in the Church service that

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prevents hurry, that it ties us to a certain given time for praying, that we cannot shorten our devotion. Oh ! if men would but go up to the House of God when they are immersed in worldly toils and business, if they would but force themselves as it were from the trying and tempting scenes in which they move, into the presence of God their Saviour, how much they might quench the rising love of the world, gain strength to crush some favourite sin, preserve their membership with Christ, and recall the sense of the love of Christ.

Now let me describe what happened one Wednesday afternoon in a small town which I was visiting. At a quarter before four the bells of the Church began to ring. As the clock struck four a small congregation was assembled in the House of God. First there was the clergyman, who, after teaching in the schools and going among the sick and poor, was now in the sanctuary refreshing his own spirit by fervent prayer, offering up also prayer for his flock, for the poor and the sick, for all estates of men, for the godly and for the sinner, for the strong and for the weak. Then there were two or three old widows, whose wrinkled faces shewed that they were not many paces from the grave. Like aged Anna

they loved the Temple and there sought to prepare themselves for their latter end. Then there were a few old men with bent forms and silvery heads. These like the aged Simeon sought the Lord in His House, and by holding communion with God were learning to depart in peace. In another place was the doctor's wife with her daughters and one curly-headed boy. It was a beautiful sight to see the whole family loving the Lord their God and worshipping Him together, turning their feet away from the vanities of the world. The doctor, a most kind and religious man, was attending a poor sick woman in a distant village while his wife and children were in Church. Near them was a grocer who found that he could leave his shop for half an hour to trustworthy apprentices and gain great succour to his soul by going to the House of Prayer. On market-days and other busy days he was not able to go ; but some three or four days in the week he was sure to be there. Further on was a young man, a lawyer's clerk, who as the office shut at four was wont to hasten to Church and seemed to pray most fervently. Then there was a young widow who had lately lost her husband, who was a carter, by a *dreadful* accident. Then there was a washer-

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woman who somehow or other could contrive to leave her wash-tub, and was able to finish her work as well as any body in the place. Such was the little congregation assembled in the Church. The Service was an evident refreshment and privilege to all; and one could not but think that if ten righteous men could have moved God to spare a city, might not this little flock be not only profiting their own souls, but acting as a sort of defenders of the town, befriending it by the daily lifting up of their hands and hearts in their Saviour's Name?

And what shall we say of others? In the back parlour of the draper's shop Mr. Watkins was reading his newspaper, while the apprentices on a slack day of trade were attending a few poor customers. He had read his paper over in the morning, but for want of something to do was dawdling over it again in an idle way. Why should he not have given that half hour to his soul? Then there was Job Burley lounging into the green-grocer's to have a chat that he might wile away half an hour or so before his tea; he had had a severe sickness and was not quite well enough to begin his work again; the day hung heavy on his hands, and he had hard work to get through the long hours. Why should he

not have gone for half an hour to the House of Prayer, and there turned his sickness to good account, there endeavoured to sanctify it, and there sought to obtain great supplies of grace before he again went forth into active life with all its snares and trials? Further on, Betsy Clamp was just hurrying into Jane Parry's, next door. "I've just dropt in, Jane," she began, "to know whether you've heard about young Sall Martin's marriage. They tell me it's all true, and John Harvey is to have his father's place in the Brewery. I've not a moment to stop; I'm as busy as a bee; but I couldn't hear about Sall without just dropping in."

"Just take a chair for a bit, Betsy, that's a good creature; I'll tell you all that I heard about it; it's a strange business; who would have thought of it? What's there to see in the girl, said I, when I heard it, that John Harvey should take up with her?"

"That's right, Jane, so said I; it's a puzzle, that's the long and short of it."

On and on the two went talking about this marriage, till they had worn the subject threadbare and twisted and twirled it in every possible way, guessing, and wondering, and doubting, and *marvelling* as if there had never been such a thing.

“ Lor,” exclaimed Betsy at last, “ why it’s just half an hour since I dropped in, I do declare ; who would have thought it ? why I must be off this minute. I’ve lots to do. Good bye, good bye ;” and off started Betsy Clamp. Now if Betsy had time to gossip about her neighbours for half an hour, might she not have spent the time far more profitably in either praying for herself, or for her neighbours in God’s House ?

Now without lengthening my account of this Wednesday afternoon, which of these parties, do you think, were best preparing themselves for the life to come ? If you take your Bible and read what our Saviour and His Apostles did, which of these parties were most like our Lord and our Lord’s best servants ? Have you a doubt on your mind ? Do you not feel that if in our own day the world were suddenly to end, you would rather be found praying in God’s House than idling away time that might have been spent upon your soul ? Even if the world were to last for thousands of years, may not we suddenly drop down and die ? And should we not therefore seek the Lord in His Temple, not on Sundays only, but as often as we can, that we may be prepared for our change ?

Soon will the Lord be here : soon will our

DAILY COMMON PRAYER.

blessed Saviour who once died for our sins come to judge mankind; soon shall we be standing before the judgment-seat. Is there not therefore need to pray without ceasing, both in Church and out of Church, on week-days and on Sundays, if we would be found faithful at our Lord's coming?

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

*TWELVE PLAIN RULES FOR THE HELP OF
THOSE WHO WISH, BY GOD'S GRACE, TO
LIVE A GOOD LIFE.*

1. BE sure you say your prayers as soon as you are up; and, if you can, say or read a verse or two out of God's Word. Here is a short prayer which you may use when you get up.

O LORD God, Thou art great and kind; I thank Thee for my life, for my sweet sleep last night, and for all the good things Thou dost give me.

I pray Thee to keep me from all sin this whole day, and to wash my soul from the stains of my past sins in the Blood of Thy dear Son.

I ask for Thy grace, that all I do and say and think this day may please Thee. Guard me from all harm, and grant me those things I wish for, which *Thou dost see* will do me good.

TWELVE PLAIN RULES

Bless all whom I love, and when we die take us to dwell with Thee, for Jesus Christ our dear Lord's sake. Amen.

Then add the Lord's Prayer.

2. Think of God now and then whilst you are at your work. You can do so in this way ; you can say, "Thou God seest me," or, "Help me to please Thee in this my work;" or else, "Make me like to my Lord Christ, who was once as poor as I am now." But most of all when you feel a wish to do a wrong thing, then say, "O God, make speed to save me, lest I hurt my soul by this sin ; help me now, dear Lord, I pray Thee, with all my heart."

3. When you are glad, you can say, "I thank Thee, dear Lord, for this good thing." When you feel sick or sad, you may say, "Lord, make me by this grief or pain more like to Christ, who once bore so much pain for me."

4. At twelve o'clock, lift up your heart to God in prayer, and say, "O dear Lord Jesus, wash my poor soul in Thine own Blood, and teach me to love Thee, who did once hang on the Cross and die for me."

5. When you eat and drink, thank God in *your heart* for your food.

6. Live in love with all, and let your words

be kind to all; for Christ loves them, and you must try to be like Christ.

7. Do not dare to say the least thing that is not true, or pure, or chaste, nor to take God's great Name in vain, for He hears each word you speak at all times.

8. Be quick and clean and neat in your work and your dress; and mind not to waste your time.

9. Do not dare to take the least thing that is not yours.

10. Mind to do what you are told by those whom God has set over you; and take great care how you speak to them, lest your words should be too quick or rude.

11. Be sure you go to Church as much as you can on Sunday; it will be a good thing, too, when you can now and then go in the week as well; and if you would live as a child of God, you must, from time to time, feed your soul with the most holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for which you must take great pains and thought and care before you go, that you may do so in the right way.

12. When night comes, you must not lie down to sleep till you have thought of all you have done wrong in the day. Then kneel down

and say your prayers. Here is a short p
for bed time.

O DEAR Lord, I come to Thee now to
that Thy love may wash out all my sin
the Blood of Thy dear Son; most of all
sins of this day

I am sorry that I have done all these w
things; make me more sorry still, and hel
by Thy grace to sin so no more, but with a
day to live a new life. Thou, Lord, art
and kind; I thank Thee for Thy care o
through the past day; for my food, my clo
and my health. I bless Thee that I am
dear child, and that Christ did once die o
Cross for me. O Lord, take care of me, I
Thee, and of all whom I love this night,
when we wake up grant that it may be
thoughts of Thee, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Here add the Lord's Prayer, and then
up and say the Belief, and add such other pr
as you stand in need of. If possible, read
verses of the Bible.

LOVE YOUR PRAYER-BOOK.

Love your Prayer-book ; yes, love it heartily, every page. It is an old saying, that next to the Bible the Prayer-book is the best book we have. So it is ; and I trust at this time we may adopt that saying afresh and cling to our Prayer-book with increasing love. We may have been so used to have it, that we may sometimes have forgotten how good a gift it is. Just as when we are strong and well we often forget to give God hearty thanks for our health, and take it as a matter of course, as if it belonged to us, and could not be lost ; then if we lose our health, if it is taken from our unthankful hands, we feel how great a blessing we have lost.

It is good for us then sometimes to pause and think of the excellence, of the value, of the beauty of the Prayer-book, that from such thoughts we may learn to bless God for having put so great a spiritual treasure into our hands, a treasure of sound doctrine, of pure devotions, suited to poor and rich, the weak and the strong, the happy and afflicted, the young and the advanced disci-

ples of Christ. It would be a grievous thing to find out its value by losing it. You may have been accustomed to carry it with you to Church all your life ; every Sunday you have been wont to use it from your youth up. It has seemed "quite natural," as we should say, to have it ; every part is so familiar to us, that it all seems quite to belong to us ; we can hardly imagine ourselves without it. And yet though we have used it so long, is it impossible to lose it ? May we not forfeit it ? May not our very unthankfulness cause it to be wrenched out of our hands, and may we not learn to find the greatness of its value by its loss ? When it is gone, we may then wake up and lament over its loss and yearn to have it back again, and reproach ourselves for not having prized and used it more. We may then feel as men once used to an abundance of water at their doors, when they journey through a sandy desert, a parched scorched wilderness, a "barren and dry land, where no water is."

And let me tell you, there are men rising up who want to deprive us of our Prayer-book ; they want to have it so changed as to make it another book ; they want what they call a "reform" of that holy, precious book. Beware of

LOVE YOUR PRAYER-BOOK.

their plans ; remember the proverb “ let well alone.” Many who are for mending a thing, end by spoiling it ; and if we have been rash enough to trust a good thing to their hands, we find, when it is too late, that they have hacked it to pieces and cut off the finest parts. Do not then give up the Prayer-book to be mended ; do not be rash enough to let the knife come near it. It has lasted long ; it has been used by thousands of saints before us whose souls are now with Christ ; it was deeply prized by our fathers, and has been well tried ; it has helped to keep Christ’s truth alive upon the earth ; it has taught the ignorant, roused sinners, rebuked the vicious, consoled mourners, and been the blessed instrument of raising souls to God. Its very age sanctifies it ; it is an old friend, and like an old friend is the more to be esteemed, not to be pushed aside for any thing that is new, not to be altered by their hasty hands who think themselves wiser than their fathers. O love the Prayer-book, for God has preserved it in the Church through so many years, through so many days of change ; He has blessed it to the good of many souls ; and woe be to us if we lightly let go even one jot or tittle of those good things which it contains. Do not be carried away by any cry of the day.

Part not with an old well-tried friend for some new and untried friend that may fail you after all, and after a few days may prove of little worth.

Some men will tell you now-a-days, "O, the Prayer-book is an old-fashioned book now; it is time to have a change in these enlightened days; we must not stand still when every thing is moving on." My friends, let us have new ways of travelling, new ways of farming, new ways of manufacturing or trading, if you will, but no new ways of religion. Keep in religion to "the old paths," for there is safety; Christ's truth is old; new errors spring up one after the other to dazzle men's eyes and lure them from the truth.

Others will say, "Why are you frightened? We do not want to make a great alteration; we only want a few slight changes; we should like to take a little piece out in this part, and add a little piece in that, and change a few words here and a few words there, that is all." Beware of these little pieces left out or put in, and of these few words added or taken away. They may be slight matters; they may be even improvements; those who now plead for change may only wish *for it in slight points*; but remember *the wedge*;

once let the thin end of the wedge in, and who can say where changes will stop? Remember, I say, the wedge; from slight matters we may be led on to great, till the very pith of the Prayer-book is all gone, till the great Gospel truths which it contains are all strained out. Let the little finger once come in and we may expect the hand to follow, and after that the arm, the head, the whole body at last. Yes, these little changes do not satisfy; they create a thirst for change; if we have a Book of Prayer, beautiful beyond all words, a Book that has grown old in God's service, if I may so speak, with a godly jealousy let us cling to every word; let us not set a stone rolling which it may be impossible to stop.

But it may be said, "Suppose the whole Prayer-book is swept away at last, suppose change comes upon change till all is changed, shall we not have the Bible left? and is not that all that Christians can desire?" Now the question is, are we sure that the Bible will remain untouched after the Prayer-book is gone? If changes in the one take place, may not changes in the other come at last? At first perhaps the alterations may be slight; a few words here and a few words there; but at last the lovers of change

may get emboldened, and the Word of God be dealt with as a mere book of man's making. I plead for the Bible in pleading for the Prayer-book; for as I look upon the latter as the interpreter of the former, if men get to the good interpretation, they may get to that which it interprets. Preserve your Prayer-book and that will help to preserve your Bible.

It might however happen, that after the Prayer-book was gone, men might dread to touch the Bible, lest by adding words or taking them away they might provoke God's vengeance; but this is a way of destroying the Bible, even though outwardly remains unchanged. Let me say that when I speak of the Bible, I do not mean simply of the letters or syllables or the paper on which it contains, or the paper on which it is printed, but I mean those truths of the Gospel, that divine teaching, those holy doctrines, which are expressed therein. It is that true and living meaning which the words are designed to convey. If men make them mean what it is not designed by God to mean, if they put a wrong sense upon its words, I say they really destroy the Bible, though the word and syllable and letter remains the same. *Look upon a dead and a living man's*

side ; they both have eyes, limbs, mouth, forehead, hands, tongue ; outwardly they are the same ; but the one has lost the living soul. So is the Bible rightly understood and the Bible wrongly understood ; the words in the former case have life, in the latter case the Bible is as good as dead.

Now this is what I dread. I dread the Bible being wrongly read ; I dread a wrong meaning, a wrong sense, being given to its true words ; for when this is done, the Bible is as good as gone ; it is a lifeless Book ; nay, it is wrested to men's destruction. This it is which makes me feel so anxiously for the Prayer-book ; for it not only helps, as a sort of outwork, to preserve the Bible, but it helps to preserve its true meaning, its true sense, its true interpretation. The doctrines of Christ will be more easily weakened and explained away when the Prayer-book is once gone.

Thus then, first for its own sake love the Prayer-book, and next love it also for the Bible's sake. It is a great guide to us, a good guardian of the truth ; it has helped the Church through many storms ; it has brought great blessings to our spiritual house ; and if we now hear rumours of war against it, and whispers

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of a desire to have it changed, we may well take alarm, and at once prepare by God's help to defend it with all our might; for we may be sure that perilous times are come; we may be sure that when such a Book begins to be disliked, there is peril to the faith, peril to the Church, peril to the cause of true religion; we may be sure that the greatest, the highest truths of Christ will not long remain untouched, that wrong doctrines are on the rise, that lax faulty interpretations of God's Word will spring up more and more. And so I say to you again, love your Prayer-book in such a time; defend it, cling to it, struggle to preserve it, pray God to guard it from thoughtless or evil hands, think more about it, prize it more, use it more; do not merely gaze at it and look at it and say, "how excellent a Book of Prayer it is;" but pray its prayers, embrace its creed with your very heart; use it earnestly. The more you use it, the more will you love it; and if there be a war against it you will fight for it with spiritual weapons as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The Church needs such soldiers now, for the days are evil, men are given to change and love new things.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

TWO-PENCE FOR THE CLOTHING CLUB.

IN our village of Stauntons, we have a famous Clothing Club, men and women pay two-pence weekly, and children a penny, which is spent at the end of October in each year, in the purchase of clothes, bedding, hats, and shoes. Reuben Martin came to live at Stauntons, and his wife Mary at once got her name enrolled at the club, and put down Reuben's name, and one of the children; when Saturday night came, he reckoned up his wages, and how they were to be spent; rent, firing, bread, "and the two-pence for the club," said Mary.

"What's that for?" asked Reuben; "I am in a friendly club, that's enough for me, and I have to pay three shillings a quarter for that."

"But this is a clothing club," said Mary, "and we shall have it out in clothes at the shop after next October."

"Oh yes, I dare say we shall," said he, "there is always something wanting, and now you have just got another two-pence from my money, and there will be no beer for supper."

"Perhaps not, sometimes," said Mary, "but I have had a good week, and so I bought the beer, Reuben, to night."

Saturday night again came round and they began to reckon up the expenses; Reuben had quite made up his mind to forget the club, but at the end of the reckoning Mary called out "and two-pence for the club, Reuben."

"Bother the club, Mary, that must go, I cannot pay it to night."

"No, Reuben," said Mary, "it must not go, for the rule is that those who do not pay regularly receive no benefit, but have only their own money back again; I hope to get a shilling, perhaps eighteen-pence, added to our money."

"Well," said Reuben, "there is the two-pence, Mary, but there will be no beer to-night."

"No, that is quite certain," said Mary, "for there has been very little work, every thing is very dull."

Mary was sorry she could not get any beer for Reuben's supper, but she knew how important it was to be regular in her payments, and

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also to keep up the club money, as when the winter came she would then have some warm clothes; her children could earn nothing, so she kept them at school, and paid for her eldest girl Jane, who had the same addition to her money as her parents. For a few weeks Reuben said nothing, but when Mary said "two-pence for the club," he laid the money down. At last another short week came, very little work, and on Saturday night very little money.

"I can never afford this money, Mary, every week," said Reuben hastily; "and what is the use of a shilling to me, sometimes I can pay and sometimes I cannot, and if the parson wont take the money as we can get it, we must go out of the club."

Mary was a little alarmed, for Reuben was very determined, so she said, "We shall have a better week next week, and I have got two days' washing."

"Yes, that is all very well, but it is every week 'two-pence for the club,' 'two-pence for the club,' whether I have got the money or not."

"And it is the same for others," said Mary; "there are many with larger families than ours, and they contrive to pay, surely we can too."

"I don't know how," said Reuben; "I sup-

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pose by doing as we must do this week, 'live closer and have less food, I don't know how they can do otherwise.'"

Mary did not say any more, the two-pence was put by for payment on the Monday morning; she did not wish to irritate her husband, it was quite enough for him to have lost his time; but to add to her troubles her boy came in and said, "Mother, my boot is split out," and Elizabeth said her shoes must be new soled for they let water.

"There never were such children, I am sure," said Reuben, "it is but a fortnight ago I paid for a pair of new shoes for James, and had Elizabeth's shoes soled."

"Six weeks," said Mary, "and the soles have not worn well, we must complain about them." The next week was a more fortunate week, Reuben had a full week's work, and got an extra six-pence for a job, and Mary was out at work three days instead of two, so James's shoes were mended and Elizabeth's new soled without trouble, and the two-pence for the club came without a murmur.

Sometimes Reuben would say "and two-pence for the club," as he gave her the money, but *generally* she had to ask for it, and it was some-

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times given pleasantly. Reuben was a very honest man and paid his debts, but he had no forethought, he would have no debt at the village shop, but then he was seldom beforehand; Mary was always trying to get, as she said, a little forward, and the club was her beginning, she contrived to pay up her own club unknown to her husband, and made a merit of paying Elizabeth's, towards which Reuben sometimes would give a penny, and she prided herself not a little that she had always contrived to keep her club money regularly paid. Towards the beginning of September Reuben once more said he could not pay the two-pence, and he would rather have the money that he had paid into the club, but Mary refused to ask for it, and said she would rather borrow two-pence of her neighbours than lose the club money, now that the time was so near for having the tickets. Reuben yielded again to her wishes, and a few weeks after Mary had her tickets, three shillings had been added to their deposits, and they could lay out their money at any shops they pleased in the neighbouring town; the only rule was that the money must be spent for clothing.

Mary was very much pleased, but would not say any thing to Reuben; she resolved to go to

town on the following Monday, and it was with great difficulty she kept the object of her visit secret. Reuben wanted a new hat and a pair of new trowsers; his money would nearly pay for both, and what was wanted, she could add from her own ticket. Monday soon arrived, and Mary set out with Elizabeth; she found that she needed many more things than she could pay for; she was in doubt whether to buy a blanket or some flannel for herself; she could not have both, she took the flannel, bought a new frock and some calico for Elizabeth, and then looked out a nice hat, and stuff for Reuben's trowsers, and a cap for the lad. The journey home did not seem long; she was pleased with the thought that Reuben would see the use of the club as she had always done. The tea table was arranged, and it seemed as if her husband would never come home; at last he arrived, and Mary was pleased to shew him what she had bought.

"Well," he said, "I did not expect this; I wanted a hat badly enough for Sundays, and my trowsers too were getting shabby; now I shall not be ashamed to be seen anywhere; but how did you get all these? the club could not pay for them."

"But it did," said Mary, "and you see what

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saving two-pence a week does. I put by two-pence out of my work, and paid for the child when you could not, so we had three shillings added to our money."

"You have done very well, Mary," said Reuben, "and I will never refuse to pay the two-pence weekly again; all this is like a gift to us, and I think we may as well put James into the club too this year; who would have thought we should have had so much clothing, and only by saving two-pence a week."

TWO-PENCE FOR THE CLOTHING CLUB.

“Nor slothful in business, fervent in serving the Lord.”

“Provide things honest in the sight of men.”

“If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

LITTLE GEOFFREY.

It was a warm summer evening, the school had long since broke up for the day, and Ellen Foster was sitting by the door of her grandmother's cottage, looking idly up the lane. The house was on the outskirts of the village, and almost from its little garden rose high up into the air the deep beech woods of Arlington; the large long house was distinctly visible, and very magnificent it looked from its size and situation, crowning the eminence on which it stood and surrounded on all sides by noble trees.

But Ellen Foster was in no mood for admiring the scene; she was thinking with a sad heart, what a dreary life hers was; her grandmother was fretful and impatient, and required a great deal of attention, and she did not much like her school, which seemed very irksome and full of constraint at times; she suspected that she was no favourite with the mistress; and she knew

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that she was not with her companions. She was now occupied in contrasting the princely mansion on the top of the hill with the humble cottage that she dwelt in at its foot. While she thus stood dreamily by the house door, two figures on horseback appeared in the lane; the one an elderly gentleman of very venerable appearance, the other a young lady who might be about twenty years of age. Ellen knew them at once to be Sir Hugh Fleming and his niece; a third figure was following them, a groom in a bright livery and splendidly mounted. Miss Fleming was the greatest heiress in the county; in a few years Arlington was to be her own, which she was to inherit in right of her mother who was lately dead. Ellen Foster looked at the cavalcade, and sighed again. Sir Hugh and his niece and their attendant rode past in silence. Miss Fleming who was said to be as haughty as she was beautiful, did not see the little girl who curtsied to her as she passed.

"You have not begun your task this evening," said old widow Foster, as her grand-daughter re-entered the house.

"There will be plenty of time for it," said Ellen, who took up, as she spoke, her bonnet and *shawl*, and commenced putting them on.

"Where are you going to, Ellen?" asked the old lady.

"I am going to Sophy White," replied the little girl impatiently, "to ask her to come out for a walk."

"If you go any where, you should go and see your cousin Geoffrey; your aunt told me to-day that you had not been lately to see him."

"I don't want to go, now," said Ellen, impatiently; "besides, I am going to Sophy White; Geoffrey makes me wretched to be long with him;" and she left the house as she spoke, and walked down the village towards the cottage where Sophy White lived; before she arrived at it she came to a road which cut across the village; here she stopped involuntarily; were she to turn to the right, she would be taken to her cousin Geoffrey, if she went straight on she would come to the dwelling of the Whites; she stopped, and hesitated which should she do; she knew which she ought to do; the choice was between a pleasant ramble with one of her school-fellows, or an hour spent in the close confinement of a sick room; which will she do? How awful are these moments! when in the common path of daily life we are called perpetually to choose between the good and the evil; such choices are

often about apparent trifles, but how awful, I say, are they to us all, when we think that they are forming what we call our characters, and are laying their stamp upon us for eternity.

The evening could not be finer, no companion could be more cheerful than Sophy, she had already declared her intention of following her own pleasure ; but she paused, as there came over her a vision of little Geoffrey's pale suffering face,—the path to the right was taken, the pleasure foregone, the duty chosen.

But, as she walked on, the thoughts which she had but now entertained returned. " I wish I were an heiress," she said, unconsciously and aloud, " a great house, a high name, plenty of money, horses, carriages, and attendance." Ellen Foster had once been up to the great house, and the spacious richly furnished rooms were not forgotten in her picture ; she was puzzled while she thought for almost the first time of the great contrast between rich and poor ; all the blessings of life seemed on the one side, all the sufferings on the other. " I wish I were an heiress," she thought, again and again, as she walked up to her uncle's cottage. A fair and quiet spot it was, surrounded by a well kept garden, the windows looking along a great expanse of down,

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which seemed to rise up to the clear grey sky above it. Her uncle was working in his garden, he spoke kindly to her, and bade her go in, and sit with Geoffrey, who he told her was alone, and would be glad to see her.

Ellen entered accordingly; the poor boy was laid upon a couch by the fireside, he smiled gently as he welcomed her, and her heart misgave her for having been so seldom lately to see him.

A few books were beside him, but he seemed to have been lately, from his attitude, looking out upon the evening.

"Ellen," he said, when they had spoken a few words on common topics, to each other. "Ellen, I am so happy." She knew not what to say quite, and he continued. "Mr. Ward has been here this afternoon, and he has told me of such beautiful things, the earth looks so fair sometimes that I am very loth to quit it, as I told him; but he spoke of another land, where the skies are never clouded and the flowers never die, and the winter never comes, and all is full of a beauty beyond what we have ever seen or guessed at here."

Still Ellen answered not, there was a long pause, the little sufferer looked earnestly out upon the hushed clear air. At last Ellen spoke.

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“Geoffrey,” she said, “you will think me very wicked, but I am not happy at all, I am very wretched, all about me seems miserable ; we live you know very poorly, and grandmother is so cross, and I am sure the new schoolmistress does not like me, and I seem to have nothing better to look forward to ; I have been wishing all the evening to be an heiress, and the wish even seems to make every thing about me more wretched than before ; it seems very hard that some should be born to nothing but happiness, like Miss Fleming, and others to nothing but misery, as I am.”

Geoffrey was silent for a moment, and he shrouded his face with his hand, uttering a silent prayer that what he spoke might be of use to his cousin ; he was not a very great deal older in years, but he had been a long time at the school, and had been very attentive there. Sickness and solitude, with the near approach of death, had made his thoughts, too, deeper and truer than perhaps they would have otherwise been.

“I wish Mr. Ward would talk to you Ellen ; I don’t think you would wish to be Miss Fleming, if he did. It is natural to us to look forward, I suppose, and long for what is bright and above us, but I am sure it is not right for you to wish

to be an heiress in the way you mean. Besides," he said, suddenly, as though the thought flashed across him, "are we not heirs already, and what inheritance so glorious as ours shall one day be?"

"What do you mean, Geoffrey? 'heirs?' 'inheritance?' I am not 'an heir,' I have no 'inheritance' to look for; nothing but poverty and vexation and misery," she added, with a sigh.

"Are we not all, dear Ellen, made at our Baptism heirs of the kingdom of heaven?"

"Yes, but that is so far off."

"Who shall say so, Ellen dear? do you mind how last summer I went about as blithe and strong as any, and now they say that I cannot live another winter; the time of waiting may be shorter than we expected, the inheritance nearer than we hoped."

"Oh Geoffrey, I do not wish mine near, I do not mean that;" and the little girl shuddered as the thought of death passed over her.

"You mean, Ellen, that you are afraid to die, your heart is bent on an earthly inheritance, you do not wish for any other."

Ellen was silent; soon she went on again. "Do you think, Geoffrey, that this heavenly inheritance would make things different now, as Miss Fleming lives now in great state, though not

so grandly as she will, they say, when she comes into her fortune."

"Yes, Ellen, I am sure of it; this I can tell you from experience. A little while ago, a year or two back, I thought like you, how fine it would be to be rich and great, now I never think of it at all; at least my notions of riches and greatness are changed, all is different. You know I have trials too as well as you Ellen," a sharp and sudden pain made him pause even as he spoke, and lay his hand to his side; when it was gone his calm smile returned and he continued, "You know I too have my trials, Ellen. I do not think that I could bear them but in the thought of that inheritance, which may one day be mine."

Ellen was silent; she looked on the young face before her, marred by suffering, yet full of a certain spiritual beauty, and she thought of her own health and strength and all her unremembered blessings; the memory of the wrongs she had fancied and brooded over was faint and indistinct, and her heart well nigh swelled with gratitude to God as she thought of the trials of little Geoffrey and contrasted them with her own.

The door opened, and Geoffrey's mother came

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in, laden with purchases which she had made in the neighbouring town. As she laid down the bread and bacon and sugar upon the table, she smiled and told Ellen that she was glad to see her with her cousin, that he had been often wishing to see her lately ; she did not tell her how disappointed the boy had been by her not coming more frequently to see him, but Ellen's heart smote her, and she determined inwardly that it should not be so again ; the sun was setting, so Ellen rose and said that she must go, no one offered to detain her, and she set forth on her way homewards.

All the air was full of rich deep crimson light ; here and there if you looked fixedly into the sky you might detect a faint star or two, the silence was intense, Ellen pursued her way, and the softening influences of the hour and of little Geoffrey's words fell soothingly on her heart. An inheritance bright and glorious and eternal that should one day, perhaps soon, be hers ; the vision quite eclipsed her envious thoughts about Miss Fleming. But would it be hers ; such heritage was only for the good, and she, was she fit for it who scarcely yet desired it ? The thought rather nerved her than saddened her, she knew that she had sinned often, but she

knew too that she might yet be pardoned if she repented of her sin, and brought it to her Saviour's feet; she knew too that through Him it was yet possible that this inheritance might be hers, and she paused a moment and prayed that it might be so, and that she might be pardoned for all her repining and discontent.

When she opened the cottage door, her grandmother spoke crossly to her, and rebuked her sharply for having wasted the evening with Sophy White and neglecting her lesson. Here was a trial at once; but words of prayer were yet upon her lip, and she said gently and simply that she had spent the evening with little Geoffrey; she then sat down, and set to work upon the lesson; this was soon learnt, and then she had to read the Psalms and Lessons to her grandmother before she went to bed. This she had often thought irksome and unnecessary; this evening it did not seem so at all. It was the fifth evening of July and the second lesson was the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Colossians; a good deal of it Ellen did not quite understand; two verses however struck her from her recent conversation with her cousin, they were the 11th and 12th, which run thus, "strengthened with all might according to His glorious

power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness. Giving thanks unto the Father which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." She looked at them again in her own Bible before she went to bed, and lay awake some little time thinking of them; "the inheritance of the saints in light." Had she then such an inheritance to look forward to, how should she envy any? But it seemed bound up with terrible conditions, this "inheritance of the saints in light;" "patience and long suffering" stood very near it in the Bible, but yet "joyfulness" was near it too. How could this be so; that thin wasted frame of little Geoffrey, his face marked by continual suffering, and yet his clear low voice saying in her ear, "Ellen, I am so happy." Did not these explain how real was the inheritance, the patience, the long-suffering and the joyfulness as well?

The progress of amendment is but slow, but if we be sincere only, it is certain; dark discontents would often return, and with them unrestrained desires; but Ellen learned to know more of their sinfulness, from her intercourse with little Geoffrey; she found too at his bedside another powerful help to her in the path which she was endeavouring to choose. Mr. Ward the clergy-

man of the village, had long watched her with some pain ; her unsatisfied countenance at school, her cheerless separation from her school-fellows, and silent reserve towards himself, had made him fear much for her welfare in spiritual things ; from little Geoffrey partly, but mostly from herself he learned now the secret of that spirit of discontented longing, which had hitherto made her both unamiable and wretched. It was a glad day when she was first led to speak of her difficulties to him ; it was an effort indeed to do so though he was very gentle and kind, and led her almost insensibly to do it ; it was an effort notwithstanding all this, but well was she repaid for making it ; his words of counsel, as well as some prayers which he wrote out for her, helped her very much ; nor was she long in making some progress both in the good opinion of her school-mistress and the favour of her companions.

The summer passed away, and little Geoffrey still lingered ; he saw the yellow leaves float past his window from the solitary elm that overshadowed his father's cottage, and the winter came and passed, and he still lingered. It was sad to see him as the warm gushing life of spring *was filling* the wide earth, (sad for an eye which

had not learned to look beyond this earth,) the young fresh flowers, the merry children that gathered them, the very joyous song of the blithe birds, all seemed so strange a contrast to his thin wan frame, his low voice, and faded colour; and yet if the world had a wondrous beauty in it, there shone even upon this little sufferer a light very glorious to look upon; you could not see him with his earnest eye full of calm but intense thought fastened on Mr. Ward, as he listened to his teaching, or bending with reverent devotion, as he mingled his own with the prayers offered up in his behalf, without feeling that there shone about him something more lovely and more lasting than all the passing glory of the spring-tide.

The dew was yet on the grass, and Ellen made her way to pay her accustomed visit to little Geoffrey; "How is he to-day?" she asked softly of his mother, for the boy was asleep when she entered.

"He said that he felt better when he awoke just now," she answered; but the heavy tears followed each other down the mother's cheek, as she spoke, and both stood silently gazing upon the sleeper.

His motionless features without any trace of

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colour might have looked like death, but for a faint smile which hovered about the mouth.

"I should like to remain here all day with him," whispered Ellen; "it is a whole holyday, you know."

"That you must not do, child, your cheek grows almost as pale as his, and Heaven forbid that you should suffer for your kindness to him."

"But I do not like to go up to the great house, and see all the gay doings, and be feasting, and perhaps laughing, when he is so ill and perhaps even," (she checked herself instinctively, and the mother completed the sentence calmly,)

"Perhaps dying, you would say, Ellen, but I don't think that; he is better to-day, and has been this week; look! now I could almost fancy even his old colour was coming back again."

Ellen still desired to stay, but little Geoffrey's mother would not hear of it, and she went with no very festive heart to prepare herself for a very festive scene.

It was the day on which Miss Fleming became of age, and Arlington was crowded with distinguished guests; there was to be a splendid entertainment in the evening, to which all the *great* families of the neighbourhood were bidden;

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the school children were to dine upon the lawn at midday, and for this Ellen Foster now prepared herself. A few months ago, the new frock and bright ribbons might have moved her more, now her heart was full of her little cousin, and she scarcely noted them.

Before she dressed, she quietly and steadily set about making such arrangements as her grandmother might require during her absence, for which she was rewarded by a pleased smile and kind word from the old lady, such as in former days had seldom been accorded to her, but now were becoming more and more familiar.

Then she put on the new clothes which had been provided for her, as well as her companions, by Miss Fleming's liberality, and set forth for the school-room ; there some of the scholars were already assembled, the rest soon arrived, and were arranged by Mrs. Brown the mistress, into the order in which they were to proceed to the house.

They set forth, carrying garlands of spring flowers, and banners that waved in the light breeze ; scarcely a cloud was upon the bright sky over them, the sunlight sparkled upon the pale young beech leaves, beneath which they walked, and threw an ever-varying shadow upon their path ; on all sides of her rose the ringing laugh

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of her companions, and their eager whispers of expectation about the coming pleasures that awaited them; but Ellen walked on alone; there was a burden upon her heart, which she strove in vain to be relieved from; there had come over her a sadder and more serious thought of life; it was not only the shadow of a trouble which could not be far distant in little Geoffrey's approaching death, but a general impression was gaining more and more upon her, that the course to which at her Baptism she had been pledged, was not one in which she could look for all things to be bright and fair; she now knew that there had been chosen for her the path of the Crucified; "patience and long-suffering," "the inheritance of the saints in light," the text which had first presented itself to her when she began to think of these things, and which had often since recurred, came now to her again, and she could not join just now in the joy of her companions.

Her school-mistress noticed this, and called Ellen to her side, so that she was able to walk on quietly and silently without attracting observation.

Triumphal arches at the entrance to the grounds, long tables spread between the rows

of stately limes that formed the far-famed avenue of Arlington, music playing, gentlemen and ladies scattered about here and there, the board soon groaning with good cheer; what a day to be remembered in the annals of their school-life was this to those village children. And then when the feast was at its height Miss Fleming came surrounded by many noble friends to look upon them; she was very-beautiful, and her beauty was set off to the utmost by the splendid dress she wore; she leant upon her uncle's arm. The children suspended their operations, and looked upon the party with admiring awe, and Ellen looked upon the brilliant heiress and her friends, but with what different feelings from those which she had once entertained. And yet now, if ever, was the time to envy the bright being who moved with haughty grace along the lines of frightened children, who had scarcely yet recovered their presence of mind sufficiently to commence again upon the good things which a moment before they were so eagerly employed upon. What could earth give which she had not; wealth unbounded was hers, beauty too was hers, and health beamed upon her cheek and sparkled in her eye; she was beloved and courted and caressed; there might be some un-

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seen grief even in such a lot as hers, but if there were, the eye saw it not, as she moved so beautiful and apparently so blessed, the mistress of all the fair lands of Arlington that lay stretched beneath her feet. And yet Ellen did not envy her now; it was a fair inheritance, but she had heard of a fairer; she knew that it was possible for the great and rich to win this latter, but she knew too, that One had said "how hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven," and she could now even bless God as she contrasted their two positions, bless Him that He had called her to serve Him in a path of perhaps less difficulty and danger, where perhaps it would be easier by His grace, to keep her eye lifted above this world and all its passing show, upon her "inheritance" with "the saints in light."

The school feast was over, and the children were suffered to play for some time in part of the grounds set apart for them; at last all this day of pleasure so long looked forward to, came to an end, and they all departed to their homes.

After looking in upon her grandmother and seeing that she did not require her assistance nor society, as an old neighbour had come in to tea with her, and was sitting exploring with *the old lady* into the past and present history

of the family of Arlington, Ellen went at once to see her little cousin; she had been haunted all day by a strange misgiving, and she scarcely dared to open the cottage-door. When she stood before it, as she paused, she thought she heard a voice, the voice of the clergyman; she opened the door at last very gently, and entered. In the inner room upon his little bed her cousin lay; there had passed a great change over him since the morning; there was upon him now that unmistakeable appearance of the immediate presence of death, which all who have watched the dying know. His father and his mother were kneeling by the bedside, while for the last time was being said over him a service, with which that little band had become of late familiar, "The visitation of the sick." The 71st Psalm had just been said, and they were giving glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as Ellen entered.

The minister paused a moment till Ellen had softly found a place and sunk upon her knees, and then arose in the room that short but thrilling supplication, "O Saviour of the world, who by Thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us, save us and help us we humbly beseech thee, O Lord."

A few short moments and the commendatory

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prayer was over, and the last sign of life which little Geoffrey shewed was a faint movement of his head in adoration of the holy Name with which it concluded. The "patience and long-suffering" were past, he too had come to his inheritance, his inheritance with "the saints in light."

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PLAIN HINTS TO A PARISH CLERK.

You have much to do with the services of the Church. You have a holy and honourable office in the House of God. As a friend then, I pray you to take heed to yourself; take heed that you act seriously in your post, and do all in a serious spirit as one who must give account. You have great privileges and great temptations; happy are you, if by God's grace you use your privileges and resist temptation; but woe be to you if you waste the one and yield to the other; woe be to you if you hold a holy office and are yet an unholy man.

It is a great privilege to have any office in the House of God. Only consider how great an honour it is esteemed to have any post or place in the palace of an earthly king; how eager men are to dwell in the courts of kings and to have to deal with kings' concerns. But how much higher is the very lowest post or place in the

House of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords ! of how much greater dignity and honour is the meanest office in His House !

But then there are temptations as well as privileges ; after a time you may get to think it a mere common thing to go to Church ; you may go through the Service by rote ; you may be regular in your place, and join in the prayers and repeat the responses because you are paid for it, without any heart or relish for the task without thinking much what you are about. You may do your duty in a careless way as mere outward form, without feeling any reverence or holy awe ; the very fact that you have to attend so often and so regularly at Church may make you look upon it as mere work to be done as a matter of business ; you may look upon yourself as a clock wound up to go for a certain time, and your whole attendance at Church may be a mere clock-work affair ; you may not more like a machine than a living soul drawn near to Christ your Saviour. Have you not been tempted to do so ? “The labourer,” it is true, “is worthy of his hire ;” but the Christian labourer must not think only of his hire ; he must think more of his heavenly than of his earthly master, more of his recompense at the Lord’s hand than of

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wages paid by man ; he must consider that while he may be regularly paid for regular attendance and service in the House of God, his Saviour may hereafter grievously afflict him for going through the Service as a form.

Let me then give you a few plain hints which may sometimes come into your mind when you are exercising your office in God's House.

1. First of all, do not hurry into Church without thought ; say some short prayer to yourself, such as, " O Heavenly Father, grant that I may remember that Thou art very near, and teach me to worship Thee in spirit and in truth for Christ's sake." You may also repeat to yourself some text that may check you from being careless, such as, " This is none other than the House of God, this is the gate of heaven," or that other text, " Keep thy foot when thou goest into the House of God."

2. Move about the Church slowly and carefully ; if you have to do so before Service, make all your preparations quietly ; find the places or place the vessels on the Altar for the Lord's Supper, if such is your task, quietly and seriously. Do not talk to any one that may be there ; or if you have to speak of any matter concerning Church, speak in a low under-tone.

These things will help you to preserve godly reverence.

3. In the course of the Service, if your attention begins to flag, if your tongue runs on while your heart has stopped, say to yourself, "I am in God's presence ; He is watching me. He is looking into my inmost heart ; the words of my tongue which the congregation hears will not do me good unless my heart goes with them." Try continually to bring back your thoughts, to keep them from straying away to worldly things, and remember what awful solemn words are passing from your tongue. Remember our Saviour's warning, "This people draw near to Me with their mouth but their heart is far from Me." Strive against such a sin as this, and offend not your God by lip-service in His own House.

4. After the Service, close the books, put away the vessels from the Altar, shut the doors, do all such things with care and reverence ; remember that your foot is still in the House of God. Do not hurry about, as if you might throw off all seriousness the moment the Service was over. As long as you remain in the Sanctuary, refrain from loud talking or haste or noise. Touch all that is in the Church with

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careful hands, for all is sanctified, all is holy unto the Lord.

5. Be not only reverent during the Sunday Services, as if yours was a Sunday religion which you put off and put on with your Sunday clothes ; whenever any religious service is to be performed on any day, give your soul to it ; for instance, when there is a marriage, do not go through it as a form ; when there is a funeral, do not go through it as a form ; take your part like a Christian ; “ rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep ; ” do not mutter over words which you are not thinking of in your heart, nor regard the service, whatever it may be, as a form to be got through in order to reach the fee.

In short, in all parts of your office and at all times remember the Judgment-seat of Christ ; remember that you are a servant of Christ, called to a holy office in His House ; it is not a worldly post, and ought not to be undertaken in a worldly spirit. A Christian clerk who loves the Sanctuary and joins fervently in all the ordinances of the Lord, dwells in the midst of privileges and of blessings. We want Christian clerks now. We have had enough of irreverent, careless, godless clerks ; they have been a scandal to the Church in past times. We want a new and better race,

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and I trust we are beginning to have a better race.

Only consider how grieved God must be to see those who are His servants in His holy House, serving Him only for worldly pay, and going through their holy work in an unholy and thoughtless way. Consider also what a scandal it is to the Church, what harm it does to the cause of true religion, when people are able to point to the clerks and say, "See what a set of careless men they are ; see how they go through the Service like parrots ; see how little they attend to what they say ; what is the good of Church-going, when clerks who go so often are so careless in the Church." Such things as these have been often said, and evil men have often excused themselves from going to the House of Prayer, because it did not seem to do good to many who were wont to go. It also greatly grieves the devout members of the congregation, it greatly distresses them to see carelessness in those who are in the clerk's holy office ; the religious and the serious wish to see reverence in all who have place or office in the House of God.

Having thus given you friendly counsel concerning your conduct whenever you are in the

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House of God and whenever you take part in any of the Services of the Church, let me also speak a few other words for your soul's good ; let me urge you to live religiously when you are in your own home, in the midst of your worldly business. Do not be content with trying to be religious in Church or in those religious acts in which your office as clerk leads you to join ; but carry a religious spirit into your daily toils ; carry it to your fire-side ; and though you need not always be talking about religion, yet always walk with God ; whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. We tell a good schoolboy by his good behaviour out of school as well as by good behaviour in it ; so he is a good clerk who behaves reverently and religiously out of Church as well as in it. Should we, for instance, see a clerk in Church on Sundays, and in the public-house on Mondays ? Should we see him at a funeral one hour and in bad company another hour ? Or rather, should not your whole life be of a piece ? When you lock the door of the Church, do not lock up your religion. Be a Christian clerk wherever you are, in all places, and on all days. Be not among the idle, or the foolish, or the gay ; be not found in places of drink or of pleasures. Remember always that you hold a

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holy office, that you must not disgrace it, that you must not be spoken against as an ungodly person ; otherwise, though you are often in God's House on earth, you will have no place, no office in His better House in heaven. O serve your Saviour so faithfully in this life, both in Church, and out of Church, that He may be able to say, " Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

PLAIN HINTS TO SEXTONS.

ou have work to do in holy places, in the
rch which is the House of God, and in the
rchyard where the bodies of Christian men,
hich the Holy Ghost once dwelt, rest till
day of judgment.

irst, then, let me say that, though the Church
ade of no more than wood and stone and
as other houses are, yet it is different
all other houses in the world ; for it is, I
at, the House of God. It is therefore to be
rently treated. When you clean your own
se, or put it to rights, you may keep your hat
or talk, or hum tunes, and bustle about as
like, without sin. It is only the house of
; it is not a sacred place ; it was not reared
sacred purposes, to the glory of Almighty
; it is not a place wholly set apart for
mn prayer ; it is not full of holy books, or
vessels, but of common things, common
iture, and is put to common uses ; you there
oy your fire ; you there have your bed ; you
e keep your clothes ; you there cook your
meals ; you there rest after your day's toil.

PLAIN HINTS TO SEXTONS.

How different is the Church ! The whole place and all that is in the place are given up to God and the things of God. Should you then sweep and clean it as if it were your own house ? Should you treat it as if it were your bed-room or your kitchen ? Nay ; should you not do your work therein with holy quietness and awe, with great reverence and care, lest you should offend that Saviour, that Lord of the whole earth, who has chosen to put His Name there, who Himself calls it His own House ?

I beseech you to give this matter more thought. Whenever your foot enters the Church, whenever you cross the porch, immediately recollect yourself ; immediately become grave and quiet. Do not for your soul's sake bustle about and hurry to and fro in a careless thoughtless way. Do not get through your work as if you were working in a shop or place of worldly business. Put things by, put things in order, or do the cleaning, or light the stoves, or sweep the floor, or whatever else you have to do, with as little noise or haste or bustle as possible ; consider that all your work in Church is work concerning the things of God. In reality you are toiling for a heavenly Master ; you are preparing things for *the worship of His children*, or putting by things

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that have been used in worship, that all things according to Scripture may "be done decently and in order." You are not only servants of the churchwardens, but much more are you servants of Christ. For what are the churchwardens themselves but servants of Christ, who have charge of His House, that it may be well kept, well cared for, reverently treated, preserved, duly supplied with all things needful for the service of Christ!

If, my friend, your work lies in the Sanctuary, it is holy work, and in Christ's Name let me pray you to do it seriously. Only remember what holy David says of God, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the House of my God than to dwell in the tents of ungodliness." O do not look upon your labours in the Church as you would on worldly labours or worldly business. Do not bring a worldly careless irreverent spirit into the Temple of the Lord.

So also of the Churchyard, though it is not so holy a place as the Church itself, yet it is a place consecrated, made sacred, and given up to holy purposes. It was called of old, "God's acre," and I wish that you especially would regard it as belonging to God. There the earthly members of Christ's servants rest; there the dead in

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Christ calmly sleep ; there lies, not common earth or common dust, but that dust which shall be quickened, which shall be raised up at the last day.

Tread therefore carefully in such a place ; it is a common thing with you to go into the Churchyard and to dig graves ; and because it is common, you may have got into the habit of digging a grave or of filling it after a funeral as if you were digging or filling in a ditch. But because you are familiar with burials, do not treat such matters in a mere business-like way. Do not shovel in the earth as if a coffin were a log of wood ; think of your own end ; think of your own burial, and behave at the grave or the funeral of others as you would wish others to behave at your own.

And now, my friend, let me beg you to remember these few words. Do your work whether in the Church or in the Churchyard as a Christian, as one who has to answer for these things before your Lord God. Try to make your office a help to your salvation. Do not let your mind get hardened ; but as you have to deal with holy places and holy things, so try to make them minister to your everlasting good. ..

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

“BYE AND BYE.”

ONE fine summer's evening I bent my steps to the churchyard of the village of Thornham, that from the knoll on which the Church stood, I might gaze on the crimson sky and the glowing landscape as the sun went down. When I passed the gate I saw that the vicar was standing by a grave on which the turf had been freshly laid. Though I made no effort to prevent him hearing me, yet he did not seem aware of my approach; his eyes were bent earnestly on the new grave; he appeared lost in thought, and an expression of great sadness crossed his face.

As I drew still nearer, he seemed still unable to hear my steps; and as if he were talking to himself he exclaimed in a melancholy yet somewhat excited way, “bye and bye, bye and bye!” There was something in the tone with which he spoke these words which raised my curiosity and made me wish to know what he meant. As he stood by the grave saying with a sad and sorrowful voice, “bye and bye, bye and bye,” I felt

sure that there was some deep meaning in the words he uttered.

At last he turned from the grave, and as I was resting myself on an old tomb-stone to which I had withdrawn that I might not disturb him, he came near me and recognised me. After a few words of friendly greeting I could not help telling him that I had overheard what he had said, and I confessed my curiosity to know what he meant.

“ It is,” he answered, “ a sad, short, and alas, common tale. Beneath that green turf,” pointing as he spoke to the grave he had been gazing upon, “ lie the earthly members of one of my flock. He once felt, moved, talked, looked upon the world as you and I do this day ; and yet now think of the decaying body that lies beneath the grass ; think of the stiff limbs of him who once stepped so actively over the fields ; of the closed eyes of him who once looked on the very scene on which we now look ; of the silent tongue which was once wont to speak in gay and thoughtless tones. O think of that vile body, that dead, decaying, crumbling body which lies at our feet. And yet we may think more of *the* soul, of the soul that has gone forth to the

BYE AND BYE.

unseen world, of the soul that has passed from these earthly scenes, of the soul that is now"—here he abruptly stopped and burst into tears.

After a time he partly recovered himself. "We must not judge," he continued, "and yet what can I say? What is the tale of this man's life who died in his very prime? When he left school he forgot the lessons that he had been taught; he lived a careless life; he did not break out into any gross and desperate sins; but he lived carelessly; he did not think about his God; he had no thought for the salvation of his soul; he came every now and then to Church, but it was evident that his heart was not there; the whole matter of religion was dull and tedious to him. He was all for the world; he minded earthly things, and lived just as if there were no such things as death and judgment to come.

At last, when he was about one and twenty, he was thrown from a waggon in the hay season and broke his leg. He was for some weeks in the house and I often visited him; for a time, when the pain was bad, he seemed inclined to listen to me, he appeared to have some regret for his wasted and careless life; but as his strength returned, he pushed off serious thought; and when I earnestly pressed him to do his

Saviour's will, to wear his cross, to die to the world, to seek heavenly pleasures and heavenly wealth, he was wont to say, "Well, sir, I hope to be better bye and bye."

When he was perfectly recovered and went about his usual work, he lived just as carelessly as before. Sometimes I would stop him and speak to him of his accident, of the warning which he had had, of the call which his Saviour had given to him, of the terrors and of the mercies of the Lord, of the uncertainty of life. "Yes, sir," he would say, in reply, "it's all true; it must be very dreadful to be lost; we ought all to live better; there's plenty of room for mending; I've had my warning, and I hope to think more of these things bye and bye."

A few years past on; a fever broke out in the parish; there was scarcely a house in which some one did not die; grave after grave was opened, and with so many fearful deaths of young and old, a deep impression was made upon the place. The sister of this young man sickened, his favourite sister; a few days closed the scene. The brother's grief was great for the time; he was startled by the suddenness of his sister's death; I seized upon the time, and *while* his heart was somewhat softened by af-

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fiction I endeavoured to sow the seed of eternal life. For a time he listened; he read the books I lent him; I found him more regular at Church; he did not hurry out of my way as he had been apt to do; his soul seemed at last to be awakened; I rejoiced greatly at the token of deeper thought; I began to have hope concerning him; but before long, again he slackened, and when I besought him not to take his hand from the plough but to persevere in Christian ways, the old answer was upon his lips, "O, I shall be better, I hope, bye and bye."

One evening I was returning home from a distant part of my parish, when a man pale with terror rushed up to me and said, "O, come, sir, for God's sake, to poor James Bond; come this minute, sir; not a moment is to be lost. O Lord, Lord, have mercy on him!"

"What's the matter?" I exclaimed, in great fear.

"O, sir, I fear there's no hope, no hope; and what, sir, if he should die! He was riding on the shafts of his waggon as it was going down hill; something frightened the horses and set them off; he leapt off the shaft to get at the leader's head, but in so doing his smock caught, and down he rolled under the wheel. O, sir, it was a dreadful, dreadful sight!"

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Greatly shocked I hurried to the house, trembling for the state of his soul. On entering the room it was indeed a dreadful sight; the poor young man, but a few hours ago full of health and strength, now lay moaning on his bed. His mother stood beside him in an agony of grief, and a few friends were with her endeavouring to comfort her, and to do what they could for the young man. "O my boy, my poor boy," she exclaimed, as I entered, "can't you do something for him, sir? O do speak to him? O his soul! his soul!" I approached the bed, but the pain was so great that the sufferer could not speak though he seemed to recognise me; at last, as if he felt himself unequal to give his mind to any thing, he muttered in a feeble way, "bye and bye." The pain soon increased, and it made one's heart ache to see him writhe in his agonies. I then urged his mother and his friends to kneel down with me and pray for him, as he had no longer power to pray for himself and he seemed getting worse. No sooner had I begun to pray, than he sighed deeply, a change passed over his countenance, and in a moment he was gone!

I need not say with what deep sorrow I went homewards after I had endeavoured to console the poor broken-hearted mother. The best con-

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solation I could not give her ; I could not speak of a holy and saintly death ; I could not say that I had a sure and certain hope of her son's salvation. Many a time have those words wrung in my ears, "bye and bye," and they came into my thoughts as I stood this evening by his grave."

After thanking the vicar for telling me this sad history I wended my way home. "How many," I said to myself, "how many there are at this very time, who, like that young man, say of the things of their souls, of the one thing needful, 'bye and bye.' " They are always putting off the chief concern ; they are always delaying from month to month, from year to year, to turn to their Saviour and to do His will with an earnest mind. What a sermon does that grave preach ! How, from his coffin, does that young man, though dead, cry out to the living who put off the service of their Lord, and urge them to seek the Lord while He may be found, and to call upon Him while He is near.

You, my friend, who are now reading these pages, take warning from this poor young man's end. Do not trifle with your soul ; do not trifle with your opportunities ; where is he now who once said, "bye and bye ?" Where will you

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be soon? Can you make sure of a single day? May not some accident sweep your soul into the presence of God? Some common day when you go out to work, thinking to come home safe at night, your life may be taken from you. O do not say to your Saviour that you will serve Him "bye and bye;" serve Him now; serve Him quickly, or you may be lost.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

DOORS OR NO DOORS, OR THE RE-ARRANGEMENT OF M—— CHURCH CONSIDERED, IN A LETTER TO THE PARISHIONERS.

It has been for some time my wish to offer to you some observations on the subject of the re-arrangement of All Saints' Church. And since all are desirous to re-arrange the Church in the best manner, I invite you to take the trouble to read the few pages which follow, and to give due consideration to the matter, because I am fully convinced that the more the question is considered, discussed, and weighed, the more it will be perceived that the best practicable arrangement of a parish Church is that which provides for the parishioners at large appropriated seats, *unencumbered with doors*.

It would be unanimously agreed to omit pew doors if it were seen that they are unnecessary, and inconvenient, unsightly, and at the same time costly, and, worst of all, a symbol of division and separation, where all should be community of heart and worship. These are the points to which I wish to draw attention.

Doors are unnecessary, for without them the

seats designed for your Church supply all that is required. They afford place and convenience for the worshippers to stand whilst they utter their praises to the Most High, and profess their faith in Him; to kneel whilst they confess their sins, and humbly pray through the One Mediator to their Father in Heaven; and to sit whilst they listen to and receive the message from on high, conveyed to them in the words of Holy Writ read and expounded.

But I said that the proposed plan will, without the addition of doors to the seats, supply both place and *convenience* to the parishioners and others.

Whatever may have been the case in other times, and under widely different circumstances, it is, in my opinion, at this time, much to be desired that, as far as it can possibly be contrived, every parishioner should have a sitting appropriated to him; appropriated not in such a sense as that he shall be able to let or sell it; but so that he may use it; that when he enters his parish Church he may at once know to what part of the venerable building he is to direct his steps; that he may be able to leave and to find, from day to day, his Bible and his Prayer-book in their accustomed place; that he may more *fully* enjoy all that indescribable and yet real *satisfaction* (I might almost say, all that help to

devotion) which arises from association and from habit.

At the same time, in a population such as that of M——, it is obviously necessary that a certain number of seats should be left free and unappropriated; open to all, rich or poor, to be entered by the newest comer, by the most passing lodger in the least inviting or accessible court or alley of the town; and, accordingly, a certain number (I trust a sufficient number) of seats will be left unappropriated. But by far the larger proportion of seats will be appropriated, equally appropriated, whether they are with or without doors.

And within a very short time after the Church has been re-opened, it will be well known what portions of it are, or are not, appropriated; and in what part of the area seats have been allotted to the several families. Moreover, the re-arrangement of the Church need not hinder the continued employment of persons, whose business it would be to guide strangers to their proper places, and to assist in taking care that 'all things are done decently and in order.'

What indeed is there in the superior sacredness of a Church, which makes it necessary that its sittings shall be partitioned off with doors, when doors are thought needless even for the reserved seats of a concert room? "Why," as

an able architect has unanswerably enquired, "*should separate enclosures, which would be thought ridiculous in the House of Commons, or Exeter Hall, or any other public assembly, be considered less so, excepting as they become more sinful, in the House of God?*"

Only let the experiment be tried in your Church, and I have no doubt that the result will be the same as that which is being strikingly exemplified in the parish Church of the town of ———, in Essex. A portion of that Church was, a few years back, filled with seats without doors. They have had a full trial, and the consequence is, that, in compliance with the general wish and desire of the parishioners, the remainder of the Church is (I believe at this moment^b) being fitted up in the same way.

To afford then place and convenience to the worshippers in All Saints' Church, there *need* be nothing more than the seats designed by your architect. I proceed now to shew that there *ought* to be nothing more, that is, that the seats ought not to be encumbered with the addition of doors. I call doors an encumbrance; and are they not so? 2000 or 2200 persons, all disengaged at the same moment, have to leave the

^a A Letter on the Fitness of Gothic Architecture for Modern Churches, by J. P. Harrison, Esq., p. 26.

^b August, 1848.

Church through narrow passages ; and instead of the passages being left free, at each successive step an opened pew door stops the way.

Were the place and the time less sacred, it would be amusing to observe the emptying of a crowded and closely pewed Church, the eagerness with which the person at the bottom of the pew watches his opportunity, as the stream of worshippers seems endlessly to roll on, the triumph with which he throws open the door, in haste lest the happy moment should escape unused, and it be pushed back upon him, and at the same time the care and caution he displays, lest he should too rudely strike the passer by. It is an affair of skill and stratagem.

I need not point out how directly the weekly recurrence of such a scene as this tends to irreverence, and to the intrusion of idle thoughts, which unfit the heart for resistance against the snares of that evil one, who is on the watch to snatch away from it the good seed of the word, lest the hearer should believe and be saved.

It is in vain to say that the passages ought to be wide enough to prevent any inconvenience arising from opened and opening doors. The necessities of the population forbid such width ; and it should not be forgotten that by the plan proposed to be adopted, the pew doors would be placed *nearer to each other than they have*

hitherto been ; they would recur literally at every step.

But further not only in leaving the Church but on entering it, doors are objectionable. In so large a congregation as that which assembles in your Church, it will unavoidably happen that some will enter after the divine service has commenced. Add doors to your seats and you more than double the interruption which the tardy arrival of a few persons occasions to the devotion of the whole congregation. Though there be the truest wish to enter quietly, yet doors will occasion noise, especially if hastily touched by one rendered nervous and uncomfortable by the sense of entering late and of being the object of many eyes ; and in a Church or in any large assembly, noise propagates itself, witness one schoolboy's cough.

At ———, in this county, the advantage gained by the introduction of seats without doors has been in this respect great. The rustic congregation now quietly enter, and assume each one his well-known place : they have learned to feel, and in their conduct they now display, that reverence which beseems the quiet of God's House.

Doors to seats are then an inconvenient encumbrance ; no one will dispute that, as a matter of *taste*, they are an *unsightly* addition ; that in

fact, a line of pew doors, seen from whatever point of view, is a line of ugliness.

That the introduction of doors will make a considerable addition to the *expense* of re-arranging the Church, would not with me be an argument against their adoption, if in other respects they were desirable. But I trust that you will well consider before you throw away money upon objects which will be unsightly, unnecessary, and inconvenient.

I do not wonder that many should have hesitated, or should still hesitate before arriving at the conclusion, that doors are undesirable, for, in the first place, the objections to pew doors have never been put before the minds of some; and again, the power of habit is to be taken into account.

A few pages back I acknowledged the beneficial effect often produced on the mind, which by habit is disposed to associate certain places and scenes with the feelings of reverence and devotion, which have so often there been kindled and exerted. And if it were proposed to retain altogether the present seats in M—— Church, with only the removal of the doors, this natural, and in itself, blameless dislike of change might, with more justice, be urged. Far be it from me to do other than applaud the desire to preserve, *without even the smallest break,*

the continuity of that chain of habitual devotion in the same part of the same temple of the Most High, by which our worship of to-day is, with additional closeness, linked with that of yesterday, with that of years long past, and by which the care-worn and world-encumbered man is least painfully, and perhaps most wholesomely, reminded of his identity with the simple, pure-hearted child he once was, and is thus in his inmost heart softened, humbled, and prepared for the movement of the Spirit, for penitence, and for love.

But there is no question as to whether these natural and wholesome feelings can or cannot be indulged. A general re-arrangement of the Church has been determined on, and nothing, I trust, is likely long to delay the carrying out of the proposed alteration. When that most desirable improvement takes place, much that is bad will be swept away; but with all this evil, so much good has been mingled and has been associated, that undoubtedly, the change will occasion a painful, though an unavoidable, wrench to the feelings of many an humble worshipper, who has been accustomed to the use of your parish Church, with all its accidental defects, a noble building; and who, perhaps, *has* to unlearn his traditional belief that its *defects* were merits.

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But this change has been begun, and must proceed; and it will be so complete and so entire, that a little more or a little less will make no appreciable difference in the sense and perception of change. All will, for the first few Sundays seem, and be, new, and you will not more or less readily, but with exactly the same degree of readiness, become accustomed to the new seats, whether they have or have not doors. Their lower height and their different arrangement will render them so unlike the old pews, whether perched up in the gallery or on the ground area, that the circumstance of their being without doors will be almost unobserved. That which would have seemed incongruous and out of keeping with the old high square or gallery pews, will at once be seen and felt to be natural and suitable to the character of the new seats.

The argument then from habit in itself of some weight, though not of sufficient weight to preponderate against other weightier and more momentous reasons, applies in this case with an inappreciably small degree of force against there being no doors to the new seats.

There is another mode of accounting for the reluctance to admit seats without doors, in spite of their superior fitness, convenience, economy, and beauty, *which I am unwilling to adopt.*

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YES OR NO DOORS.

of the Gospel, is clearly and to such an unchristian, and by the wealthy, such a self-ction, between the richer and of a congregation. But this

ing for our learning, by the Holy Spirit to whom all that future, all the good and all ward to befall the Church of known,—St. James expressly ny such distinctions, any such in the House of Him who outward appearance:—"My the faith of our Lord Jesus of Glory, with respect of per-e come unto your assembly a ring, in goodly apparel, and oor man in vile raiment; and o him that weareth the gay unto him, Sit thou here in a say to the poor, Stand thou nder my footstool: are ye not selves, and are become judges earken, my beloved brethren, n the poor of this world rich of the kingdom which He em that love Him? But ye



But although few persons, I trust, would avow, even to themselves, that they are influenced by a motive so contrary to the spirit of Christ's holy religion; yet, perhaps, some may unconsciously be biassed by a feeling of exclusiveness, and a sort of association in their mind, between open seats and vulgarity, as if open seats might be good enough for the poor, but were not good enough for the respectable classes of society. But is it well unnecessarily to mark such personal distinctions in God's House? The world is the place for worldly distinctions. There they are inevitable, and are ordained to exist in the course of Divine Providence; but in the House of God, the less that the inequalities of the world are allowed to enter, the less will your Church be unfit for the worship of Him with whom is 'no respect of persons.'

In the Temple of the Most High let none dare to boast themselves as rich, lest with the rich they be 'sent empty away.' Let no one regret to find that no door of separation keeps him apart from the company and fellowship of the poor—for 'He scattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He putteth down the mighty from their seats, and exalteth them of low degree; he filleth the hungry with good things.'

The whole tenor indeed of Scripture, the whole

spirit and character of the Gospel, is clearly and decisively opposed to such an unchristian, and when established by the wealthy, such a self-condemning distinction, between the richer and the poorer portions of a congregation. But this is not all.

St. James, writing for our learning, by the inspiration of that Holy Spirit to whom all that then was, or still is future, all the good and all the evil thenceforward to befall the Church of God, was and is known,—St. James expressly warns us against any such distinctions, any such respect of persons in the House of Him who looketh not at the outward appearance:—"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? But ye

DOORS OR NO DOORS.

have despised the poor.” “If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin^c.”

Surely then there cannot be any wish to raise a contemptuous distinction between rich and poor: and to avoid such a distinction I would urge the omission of doors. Their removal will, in a great measure, take away the appearance, and with the appearance the feeling and sense of contempt, whilst it will in no degree interfere with that appropriation of sittings, which is as much in accordance with the habits, and in agreement with the wishes, of the poor as of the rich.

Again, the wish to retain pew doors arises, I apprehend, in many instances, from an imperfect appreciation of the nature of common prayer. Notions which properly belong only to private and solitary prayer are applied to the collective worship of the whole congregation. I doubt not that many a person, when shutting himself into the concealment of his high pew, has thought of the words of our Blessed Lord, as though they were applicable to the public service of the Sanctuary. “Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.”

They forget that in the language of one of the

^c James ii. 1—6, 9.

homilies, "In the Scriptures we read of three sorts of prayer, whereof two are private and the third is common. These be the two private sorts of prayer ;—the one mental, that is to say, the devout lifting up of the mind to God. The other vocal, that is to say, the secret uttering of the griefs and desires of the heart with words, but yet in a secret closet, or some solitary place. The third sort of prayer is public or common ; of this sort of prayer speaketh our Saviour Christ, when He saith, 'If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them ^a.'

Common prayer is something more than many separate individual prayers, which ascend as it were in parallel lines, and never meet, even though they reach as far as to the throne of grace.

The private prayers of many single, separated worshippers, may be distinguished like the single and distinct drops of rain which water and bless the earth, over which mankind has been divided and scattered forth from Babel.

Common Prayer is as the mist which in Paradise, in one unbroken cloud, 'went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground ^e.'

^a Hom. of Com. Prayer, Matt. xviii. 19, 20.

^e Genesis ii. 5, 6.

Private prayer is the streamlet which, 'when God causeth His wind to blow,' flows from the melting ice which had gathered round the naturally cold heart of man. It becomes common prayer, when that streamlet and ten thousand others have united, and roll onward in one broad indistinguishable volume; not ten thousand thread-like rivulets, but one mighty river.

Such is, or should be, the collective worship of the vast congregation assembled in your parish Church; it is not the private prayers of some two or twenty hundred isolated individuals; it is not merely the family prayers of some four hundred or five hundred parted, disjoined families; it is the one collective, and yet single offering of prayer from the whole congregation, lifting up their voice to God with one accord, and saying with one heart and with one voice, Amen.

Such is Common Prayer, and that arrangement of a Church which will best express and set forth even to the eye the community of public worship, will most subserve the purposes of devotion, and will be most suitable to the House of Prayer. The most fitting arrangement is that which will least have the appearance, and, therefore, least have the effect, of dividing the congregation into disconnected and separate sections,

¹ Psalm cxlvii. 18.

and which will avoid encumbering the Church with any needless signs and tokens, instruments and means of disunion and isolation.

It will now be seen that, besides their superior convenience, economy, and beauty, two most important reasons have been assigned for giving the preference to seats without doors ; first, that this arrangement of a Church is more in accordance with the rule of Holy Scripture, as laid down by St. James, and avoids the appearance of that exclusiveness and contempt of the poor which is condemned by the Apostle. And secondly, that such a mode of fitting up a Church, without needlessly breaking it up into fragments and compartments, is most in harmony with the true character of collective worship, and of common prayer.

On the whole, then, I cannot but hope that when the subject has received fuller and deeper consideration, you will conclude that to insert doors would be to continue a worse, instead of introducing a better arrangement.

If this is once perceived, your course is plain. In re-arranging the House of God, you will not only be most desirous to adopt nothing which is contrary to good, but also nothing which is other than the best.

And rightly,—both because of the reverence which you entertain towards the Almighty, whose

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Temple it is which you are about to adorn, and to whom nothing that is second best can, without profaneness, be offered, when that which is better might be employed ; and also for the sake of the worshippers who are henceforth to assemble in that His House. For although many particular persons may have been preserved from the snare, there can be no question that closed up pews have a decided tendency to produce that feeling of exclusiveness which they *seem* to express, and that they have a still more decided tendency towards, and have in fact been the means of, materially impairing amongst many of us, a just and pious appreciation of the common and collective nature of public worship.

On this higher and more solid ground of the principles involved in the question, as well as on the lower ground of sufficiency, convenience, economy, and beauty, I trust that you will decide that your parish Church shall be re-arranged without doors to the seats.

Such an arrangement will be most worthy of its own beauty, most suitable to the worship for which it is designed, and most in accordance with the spirit of the sacred volume of Holy Writ.

A SCRIPTURE PARAPHRASE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

(SPECIALLY INTENDED FOR PENITENT PERSONS.)

Our Father, which art in Heaven.

O GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, Eph. iii. 15.

Who hast given power to all that believe in Him to become the sons of God, S. John i. 12.

Whose children we are by faith in Christ Jesus; Gal. iii. 26.

Send forth we pray Thee the spirit of Thy Son into our hearts, crying Abba, Father. Gal. iv. 6.

Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son. S. Luke xv. 18.

But like as a Father pitieth his own children, so dost Thou pity them that fear Thee. Ps. ciii. 13.

Unto Thee lift I up mine eyes, O Thou that dwellest in the heavens. Ps. cxxiii. 1.

Hear Thou in heaven Thy dwelling place, for

A SCRIPTURE PARAPHRASE OF

**Thou only knowest the hearts of all. 1 Kings
viii. 39.**

**And Thou, our heavenly Father, hast promised
to give good things to them that ask Thee.
S. Matt. vii. 11.**

Make me as Thy child, S. Matt. v. 45.

**And may Thy spirit bear witness with my spirit,
that I am one of Thy children. Rom. viii. 16.**

Hallelued be Thy Name.

**How excellent is Thy Name, O Lord, in all
the earth. Ps. viii. 1.**

**I have too often forgotten Thy Name; Ps.
xliv. 20.**

**But now will I lift up my hands in Thy Name,
Ps. lxiii. 4.**

And bless Thy Name. Ps. lxi. 30.

**I will praise Thy Name for all Thy loving-
kindness, Ps. cxxxviii. 2.**

**And will bless Thy Name for ever and ever;
Ps. cxlv. 1.**

**Even that blessed Name, which is above every
Name, the Name of Jesus. Phil. ii. 9.**

**Help me to believe in the Name of that Thy
dear Son; S. John i. 12.**

**For there is none other name under heaven
whereby I may be saved. Acts iv. 12.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Help me to praise and glorify Thy Name.
1 Thessa. ii. 12.

Give me strength that I may do all things
in His Name, Col. iii. 17.

And that believing I may have life through
His Name. S. John xx. 31.

From the rising up of the sun to the going
down of the same, the Lord's Name be praised.
Ps. cxiii. 3.

Thy kingdom come.

THY kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and
Thy dominion endureth throughout all ages. Ps.
cxlv. 13.

Thy kingdom O God is at hand, enable me
to repent truly, and believe the Gospel. S. Mark
i. 15.

Take not away Thy kingdom from me, though
I have not brought forth the fruits thereof. S.
Matt. xxi. 43.

Remember me, O Lord, in Thy kingdom, and
give me a share in that kingdom which cannot be
moved. Heb. xii. 28.

Blessed be Thou, O God, who hast delivered
me from the power of darkness and translated
me into the kingdom of Thy dear Son. Col. i. 13.

A SCRIPTURE PARAPHRASE OF

Bring others also, O Lord, into Thy kingdom, and hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. Rev. xii. 10.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Nor every one that saith unto Thee, Lord, Lord, shall enter into Thy kingdom, but they that do Thy will, O God. S. Matt. vii. 21.

I have done contrary to Thy will. Teach me to do Thy will, (for Thou art my God) Ps. cxliii. 10.

Even as the holy Angels do in heaven; Ps. ciii. 20.

That so I may be like unto Him who came down from heaven, not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. S. John vi. 38.

And whatsoever Thou dost appoint for me, Thy will O Lord be done. Job i. 21; xi. 10.

Not as I will, but as Thou wilt, O Lord. S. Matt. xxvi. 39.

Give us this day our daily bread.

GIVE me, O Lord, what I need, Prov. xxx. 8.

And whatsoever I have, make me therewith to be content; Heb. xiii. 5.

For Thou givest us all things. Ps. ciii. 5;
S. Matt. vi. 25.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Ps. cxlv. 15.

I have eaten too long the bread of wickedness. Prov. iv. 17.

Now fill me not with bread only, but with every word that proceedeth out of Thy mouth. Deut. viii. 3 ; S. Matt. iv. 4.

And fill my soul with the bread of life, even with my dear Saviour, the living bread which came down from Heaven, that I may eat this bread and live for ever. S. John vi. 35.

*And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that
trespass against us.*

I HAVE indeed sinned and committed iniquity, and done wickedly. Dan. ix. 5.

But to Thee, O Lord, belong mercies and forgivenesses, though I have rebelled against Thee. O Lord hear, O Lord forgive. Dan. ix. 9, 19.

Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great ; blot out all my transgressions. Ps. li.

Help me also to forgive others their trespasses against me. S. Matt. vi. 14 ; xviii. 21, 35.

Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. S. Luke xxiii. 34.

Cause all mine iniquities to pass from me. Zech. iii. 4.

Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.
S. Matt. viii. 2.

Thou canst pardon my very many sins, S. Luke
vii. 47.

For the blood of Thy dear Son Jesus, which
was shed for me, S. Matt. xxvi. 28.

Cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John i. 7.

And lead us not into temptation.

I HAVE gone astray, and been sore tempted by
mine own lusts; S. James i. 14.

But Thou knowest how to deliver me; 2 S. Pet.
ii. 9.

And Thou, O my Saviour, hast been tempted
Thyself, and art able to succour them that are
tempted. Heb. ii. 18.

Help me to watch and pray, lest I enter into
temptation. S. Matt. xxvi. 41.

Let me never tempt and grieve Thine Holy
Spirit; Acts v. 9.

But in all my temptations make a way for me to
escape that I may be able to bear it; 1 Cor. x. 13.

For Thou, O God, art faithful, who hast pro-
mised. Heb. x. 23.

May Thy Good Spirit lead me in the right
way, and in the paths of righteousness, for Thy
Name's sake. Ps. cxliii. 10.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

But deliver us from evil.

done evil in Thy sight, O Lord, Ps. li.
turn me from mine evil ways, Prov. viii.
xxviii. 28.

return unto Thee. Jer. xxxvi. 3, 7.

er me from all evil; Ps. cxxi. 7.

from the wicked. Jer. xv. 21.

er me from all the evil that is in the
S. John xvii. 15.

hou gavest Thy Son for our sins, to de-
from this evil world. Gal. i. 4.

er me from the wrath to come; 1 Thess.

er me from the power of Satan; Heb. ii.

from every evil word and work, and pre-
e to Thy heavenly kingdom. 2 Tim. iv. 18.

ve is the kingdom, and the power and the glory.

For ever and ever. Amen.

: Thee all things are possible. S. Matt.

I believe, help Thou mine unbelief.
ix. 24.

Thine hand is power and might; and to
ngth to all. 1 Chron. xxix. 11.

A SCRIPTURE PARAPHRASE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

All things are Thine—The kingdom is Thine
—To Thee be the glory. Ps. viii. 6 ; ciii. 19 ;
cxv. 1.

The Lord hear all my petitions for Jesus
Christ His sake, who hath promised that what-
soever we ask in His Name believing, Thou wilt
give it. S. John xiv. 13.

To Him, with the Father and the Holy Ghost,
be blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanks-
giving, (dominion) and honour and power and
might, even unto our God for ever and ever.
Amen. Rev. vii. 12.

OUR FATHER, WHICH ART IN HEAVEN,
HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

THY KINGDOM COME.

THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH, AS
IT IS IN HEAVEN.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES,
AS WE FORGIVE THEM THAT
TRESPASS AGAINST US.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION ;
BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL :
FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM,
THE POWER, AND THE GLORY,
FOR EVER AND EVER.

AMEN.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

CATECHISM CONCERNING THE CHURCH.

SECTION I.

On the Unity of the Church of Christ.

1. You have now been instructed in the Church Catechism, and have been taught to speak of yourself as by baptism a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven; or, in other words, as a partaker of the privileges of Christ's Church. To the same intent, in the Apostles' Creed, you have learned to profess your belief in the Holy Catholic^a Church. What is here meant by "The Church?"

A. Not a temple or Church builded of timber or stone^b. The visible Church of Christ is that company of men throughout all the world^c, who have been called out of the power of Satan into

^a Catholic is the same as universal.

^b Cranmer's Catechism.

^c Col. i. 13.

the kingdom of God by the Gospel of Jesus Christ^d.

Note. The visible Church has been compared

To a household, of which Christ Himself is the household^e.

To a flock, of which Christ is the good Shepherd^f.

To the branches of a vine, of which Christ is the true Vine^g.

To a bride, of which Christ is the Bridegroom^h.

To a kingdom, of which God is the Kingⁱ.

To a net, which when cast into the sea gathereth of every kind, both bad and good, &c. &c.^k

(See Matt. xiii. where the kingdom of Heaven means the same as the visible Church.)

To a building of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone^l.

To a body, of which body Christ is the Head and Saviour^m, &c. &c.

2. How do you know when a company of persons professing themselves Christians are really a branch of the Church?

A. When they hold the faith of the Apostles, follow their rules, and are guided by their practice.

^d Acts xxvi. 18.

^e Matt. x. 25; Gal. vi. 10.

^f John x. 11—16.

^g John xv. 1—8.

^h Eph. v. 23, 24; John iii. 29; Rev. xix. 7; xxii. 17.

ⁱ Matt. xviii. 23; xxv. 34.

^k Matt. xiii. 47.

^l Eph. ii. 20; 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10; 1 Peter ii. 5.

^m Col. i. 18; Eph. i. 22, 23; v. 23.

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3. Do the Scriptures shew that the Church must hold the faith of the Apostles, follow their rules, and be guided by their practice?

A. Yes : for our Saviour Jesus Christ bade the Apostles teach (or make disciples of) all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He had commanded them^a; and said to them, "He that heareth you heareth Me^o:" and we read that "they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship^p."

4. Did our Lord Jesus Christ speak expressly concerning the duty of unity in His Church?

A. Our Lord teaches plainly, not only that the Church should be one body of men, but that that body should be a body living together in unity.

Thus He said, speaking of both Jews and gentiles who should believe, "They shall be one fold and one shepherd^q."

And again; "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as we are^r."

^a Matt. xxviii. 20.

^o Luke x. 16.

^p Acts xi. 42. "To have any claim to identity and union with the primitive Church, we must not only hold the Apostles' doctrine, but the Apostles' fellowship;" and we know that we hold the Apostles' fellowship, when we are in communion with the Bishop of the diocese, and with the clergyman of the parish in which we live.

^q John x. 16.

^r John xvii. 11, 20, 21.

5. But do you not read in the New Testament of many Churches, such as the Church of Jerusalem, the Church of Antioch, and the Church of Rome?

A. Yes: but these were all branches of the One Catholic and Apostolic Church. All who believed were members of that one body, of which Christ is the Head. They lived in different places, it is true; but they held the same faith, and had constant communion one with the other*.

6. How do you know that their faith was one, and that they had communion one with another?

A. Because St. Paul reminds the Ephesians[†], that as there is one Lord and one Baptism, so there is one faith, and they shewed this communion in their lives and conversation.

Thus we read, "that they were all with one accord in one place"; and that

"The multitude of them that believed were of one heart, of one soul*."

And St. Paul says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the

* Hooker (Eccles. Pol. iii. 1) exemplifies this in the following manner: "As the main body of the sea being one, yet within divers precincts hath divers names; so the Catholic Church is in like sort divided into a number of distinct societies, every of which is termed a Church within itself."

† Eph. iv. 5; Tit. i. 4.

* Acts ii. 1.

* Acts iv. 32.

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same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment’.”

Again, “ Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ, that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind STRIVING TOGETHER for the faith of the Gospel.”

And St. Peter, “ Be ye all of one mind.”

SECTION II.

On the Ministry and Discipline of the Church of Christ.

7. You say that the Church of Christ may be known by its holding the faith and following the rules and practice of the Apostles ; by what outward marks or signs can you judge of its holding their faith and following their rules and practice ?

A. If the pure word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to

’ 1 Cor. i. 10.

• Phil. i. 27.

• 1 Peter iii. 8. See also Rom. xv. 5, 6 ; Gal. iii. 28.

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Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same^b.

8. Whose office is it to preach the word and to administer the Sacraments?

A. It is the office of those who are lawfully called, and sent to preach and to minister by persons who have public authority to appoint them^c.

9. Who are the persons who have this public authority to appoint ministers in the Church?

A. The Bishops, that order of pastors to whom it belongs to rule and watch over the Church^d.

10. From whom did the Bishops receive such authority?

A. From the Apostles, who, having received authority from Christ, appointed the first Bishops, and gave them authority to ordain others with the same powers; so that there should never be wanting a succession of rulers to rule the Church of Christ.

Thus our Lord said to the Apostles, "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you^e."

^b Article XIX.

^c See Art. XXIII. and compare with the Ordination Service, and with Art. XXXVI.

^d See the Service for the Consecration of Bishops.

^e *John* xx. 21.

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And again, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world^f."

And St. Paul to Timothy, "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also^g."

Again, "Watch THOU,—do the work of an Evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry: for I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand^h."

And again, "Lay hands suddenly on no manⁱ."

11. May not a person then of his own accord take upon himself the office of preaching God's word and administering the Sacraments?

A. No^k. What St. Paul said of the ministers of religion under the Jewish dispensation has never been repealed, and therefore applies with full force to the ministers of religion under the Christian. "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made an High-Priest, but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, to-day have I begotten Thee^l."

12. But may not Christians appoint their own spiritual teachers, and adopt their own plans of Church government?

A. No. For when God appoints a way to

^f Matt. xxviii. 20. ^g 2 Tim. ii. 2. ^h 2 Tim. iv. 5, 6.
ⁱ 1 Tim. v. 22; Tit. i. 5. ^k Article XIII. ^l Heb. v. 4, 5.

obtain a blessing^m, it is presumptuous and sinful to seek it in any other way. God has given pastors and teachersⁿ, the humble Christian therefore will hear them.

Note. That men will depart from the faith of the Apostles, and set at nought their rules and practice, we are plainly warned in Scripture . Even the authority and personal character of St. Paul did not secure him from being despised and spoken against. When therefore we observe such things, we should not despond, but receive them rather as another and additional evidence of the truth of God's word.

13. How many orders of ministers were appointed by the Apostles ?

A. Three, and these always from the Apostles' times have existed in the Church : namely, Bishops^p, Priests, and Deacons.

14. Which of these orders did the Apostles first appoint ?

A. The order of Deacons^q.

15. How do you know that this order was not appointed solely for that special occasion

^m 2 Kings v. 12, 13.

ⁿ Eph. iv. 11.

^p Matt. xviii. 7; 1 Cor. xi. 19; 2 Tim. iv. 3; 2 Cor. x. 10; 2 Pet. ii. 1.

^q For the first fifteen hundred years after Christ, there never was a body of Christians without a Bishop. See the Preface to Ordination Services.

^r Acts vi. 1—6. The word Deacon means a minister, or a servant waiting on his ministry or service.

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mentioned Acts vi., and how do you know that it was to be continued in the Church?

A. Because St. Paul in his Epistles^r speaks of the office of a Deacon as existing some years afterwards, and in other Churches beside the Church of Jerusalem, where the first Deacons were ordained, and further gives instructions for faithfully discharging that office.

16. What is the office of a Deacon?

A. To assist the Priest in his ministrations, and to preach^{if} he be admitted thereto by the Bishop^s.

17. What is the office of a Priest?

A. To offer up the prayers of the congregation, to pronounce absolution or remission of sins to the penitent faithful, to minister the Holy Sacraments in the congregation, whereunto he has been appointed by the Bishop, and to preach the word of God.

18. Do the Scriptures expressly speak of the order of Priestsⁿ and of their ordination?

^r Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8, 13.

^s See the Service for the Ordering of Deacons, "It appertaineth," &c.

ⁿ See the three Absolutions, (1) in the Daily Prayer, (2) in the Communion Service, and (3) in the Visitation of the Sick, and the Exhortation in the Service for the Ordering of Priests, commencing with the words, "You have heard, brethren," together with the questions and answers following.

^a The clergyman of a parish is generally a Priest, but sometimes a Deacon.

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A. Yes. We are told that Elders² were ordained in every Church¹.

Thus St. Paul said to Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every city³."

19. What is the office of a Bishop?

A. It appertains to the Bishop as chief officer of the Church to consecrate other Bishops⁴, to ordain Priests and Deacons, to feed the flock of Christ⁵, over whom the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, to confirm⁶ those who take upon themselves the promise and vow made in their names at their Baptism, to pronounce censure on offenders, and to rule the Church.

20. When was the order of Bishops⁴ appointed?

A. They succeeded the Apostles in the rule of

¹ An Elder, means the same thing as Priest. The Greek word Presbyter, an Elder, has been contracted into Prester first, and then into Prest or Priest.

² Acts xiv. 23.

³ Tit. i. 5.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

⁵ See the address of the Archbishop in the Service for "the Ordering or Consecrating of an Archbishop or Bishop," commencing with the words, "Brother, forasmuch as," together with the questions and answers following. See also Articles of Religion, XXIII. and XXVI.

⁶ See the exhortation to Godfathers and Godmothers in the Service for the Public Baptism of Infants, the concluding Rubrics to the Church Catechism, and the Order of Confirmation.

⁴ The word Bishop means an overseer or overlooker. (Acts II. 28.)

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the Church of Christ; and as the Church increased, so was their number multiplied*.

21. What was the manner of their appointment?

A. The same which the Apostles used when St. Paul and St. Barnabas were ordained to be Apostles. They were consecrated or set apart to this office by the laying on of the Apostles' hands with prayer^f.

See Bp. Beveridge's Second Sermon.

-22. To sum up all then, of whom do ministers of the Church receive their authority?

A. Not of men, neither by men, but of Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church.

23. Since then ministers are ambassadors for Christ, and receive their authority from Christ Himself, what is the duty of Christians in general towards them?

* St. Clement, the companion of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3) and Bishop of Rome, says in his epistle to the Corinthians, speaking of the Apostles, (sect. 42,) "Preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits of their conversions to be Bishops and ministers over such as should afterwards believe." (Sect. 44.) "So likewise our Apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ, that contentions would arise on account of the Ministry, and therefore having a perfect foreknowledge of this, they appointed persons, as we have before said, and then gave a direction in what manner, when they should die, other chosen and approved men should succeed in their ministry."

Irenæus also, Bishop of Lyons, (who suffered martyrdom in the year of our Lord 202,) says, "We can name the men the Apostles made Bishops in their several Churches, appointing them their successors." See also Eusebius, and other historians of the Church.

^f *Acts xiii. 23; Rom. i. 1; 1 Tim. ii. 7; 2 Tim. i. 6.*

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A. 1. To account of them as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God^g.

2. To listen to them when they preach and exhort, either in public or private, as to ambassadors sent by Christ, and entreating in His stead^h.

3. To seek to know them that labour among them, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sakeⁱ.

4. To obey them as being over them in the Lord, and watching for their souls, as they that must give account^k.

SECTION III.

On the Communion of Saints in the Church.

24. You have now shewn what is the faith and what are the rules and practice of the Apostles, by following which, the members of the Church may be known. What special privileges

^g 1 Cor. iv. 1.

ⁱ 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

^h 1 Cor. v. 20; Eph. vi. 20.

^k Heb. xiii. 17.

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do you enjoy, by being and continuing a true and faithful member of the Church?

A. I believe that I shall be thereby a partaker of all those privileges which I am taught to remember when I say in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe the communion of saints."

25. What do you understand by this article of your belief?

A. I believe that holy men in Christ have in common the Spirit of Christ, having been made to drink into that one Spirit¹. That in the different means of grace they all partake of that Spirit, and have communion and fellowship with one another, and with God in Christ. That those who serve Christ on earth and those whose souls are with Christ in the unseen world are one through Him, though separated in the body.

26. What are they which are called means of grace?

A. All the ways by which God calls us to righteousness and faith in Him^m: all the ways by which He puts good desires into our minds, and enables us to grow in grace. The principal are, the blessed Sacraments, prayer and fasting, the confession of our sins to God, the assembling

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13; 1 John i. 3. ^m Luke xi. 13; Isa. lvi. 7; Rom. x. 17; Acts xi. 18; 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21; John vi. 50, 51; Luke xxiii. 19.

ourselves together in public worship, and reading the word of God, and hearing it read and preached.

27. How do the saints on earth hold communion with God in the use of these means of grace?

A. In that God according to His promise conveys his Holy Spirit through these means to such as rightly use them.

Thus Christ promises, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

28. Is there not one of these ordinances in which Christians have a more near and close communion with God, and with the saints?

A. Yes: the Holy Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, which is for that reason called the Holy Communion.

Thus St. Paul says, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

And our Lord, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him"

29. How do you understand Christ's promises

* Matt. xviii. 20.

* 1 Cor. x. 16.

* John vi. 56.

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of being with those and dwelling with those who partake of His body and blood?

A. Those who duly receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are thereby united to Christ after an heavenly and spiritual manner, and God sends the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, making them holy, humble, full of hope, peace, and joy, and enabling them to do all things according to His will^a.

30. What text of Scripture directs you how to judge of a Christian's communion with God?

A. "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him; and hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us^r."

31. You have now shewn how the saints hold communion with God; how do they hold communion one with another?

A. By means of the same ordinances. As by the Holy Spirit they have been baptized into one body^s, the Church of Christ, and have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and are partakers of the same Spirit, so are they taught to look upon themselves as every one members one of another^t.

^a Gal. v. 5; 1 Pet. i. 22; Rom. viii. 13, 26.

^r 1 John iii. 24.

^s Eph. iv. 25.

^t 1 Cor. xii. 13; Heb. xii. 22—24.

32. What are the advantages arising from this communion one with another?

A. The saints have not only an interest in the prayers of the congregation in which they worship, but in the prayers of the Church throughout the world.

33. Do you believe that the saints receive any benefits from such prayers?

A. Yes. For St. Paul bids the Churches strive together in their prayers for him, and ascribes his deliverance to their prayers; and many examples in Scripture shew that God especially regards the united prayers of the Church.

Thus when St. Peter was delivered from prison, it was in answer to the prayers of the Church^a. And St. Paul obtained his liberty at Rome, God delivering him from so great death, when the Church helped together by prayer for him^b.

34. Does this communion belong to saints who have never seen each other?

A. Yes. For they walk by the same rule mind the same thing, reverence the same pastors and teachers, pray for each other in the same prayers, and obtain help for each other in time of need^c.

^a Acts xii. 5—12.

^b 2 Cor. i. 10, 11.

^c Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. vii. 1—4.

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Note. "There was a time, and it is pleasing to look back to it, when a Christian, furnished with proper credentials from his Bishop, might travel through the world, from east to west, and from north to south, and be received to communion with his brethren in any part of the globe then known." (Bishop Horne's Sermon on Christian Unity.)

35. Does this communion of saints end with the present life?

A. No. There is a communion between living saints and the spirits and souls of the righteous who are departed.

36. How do living saints have communion with departed saints?

A. The living rejoice in the happiness of those who have departed this life in God's faith and fear, and look forward with longing to the time when, together with them, they shall have their perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in God's eternal and everlasting glory.

37. How do departed saints have communion with living saints?

A. Inasmuch as they are all members of that mystical body, of which Christ is the Head*.—And by means of prayer and praise*.—For the

* Heb. xii. 23.

* Hooker, b. v. ch. 23. The knowledge is small which we have on earth concerning things that are done in heaven. Notwithstanding, thus much we know *even of saints* in heaven, that they pray. (Rev. vi. 9.) *And therefore prayer being a work common to the Church as well triumphant as militant, a work common unto men with angels,*

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prayers and praises of those who are departed continually ascend together with those of their fellow-servants and brethren on earth to the throne of God^b.

38. Do you then believe that the communion of saints is a privilege to be valued by Christians?

A. Yes: so much so, that I am persuaded I should hazard my salvation if I had no part in it.

39. What is the duty of Christians to be learnt from that article of their belief, "The Communion of Saints?"

A. To keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to follow the faith of departed saints, to be thankful for their good examples, to be full of almsgivings, to love and to cherish Christ's poor, and earnestly to pray for the peace and concord of the Church, that "as there is but one body and one spirit and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all," so we may be of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with "one mind and one mouth glorify God, through Jesus Christ our Lord^c."

what should we think, but that so much of our lives is celestial and divine as we spend in the exercise of prayer!

^b *Rev.* vi. 9—11; *xiv.* 3, 5; *vii.* 15.

^c *Eph.* iv. 3—6; *Rom.* xv. 6; *Phil.* i. 27; *Acts* iv. 32.

APPENDIX.

A Catalogue of the Archbishops of Canterbury, also of Lyons and of Arles in France, from which sees the Archbishops of Canterbury derive their succession.

THE following catalogues are taken from the work of Severtius on the Archbishops of Lyons, of Petrus Saxius on the Archbishops of Arles, and from Godwin's work *De Præsulibus Angliæ*.

It is not certainly known by whom the British were converted to Christianity, but it is known that they were so in the times of the Apostles, and some have asserted that St. Paul himself visited Britain. The first author who alludes to Britain as Christian, is Tertullian, in the second century. The next Origen. After that we read, that, when Constantine summoned a Council at Arles (A.D. 314), three British Bishops were present; Eborius from York, Restitutus from London, and Adelphius from Lincoln; and in the fifth century, several councils of British Bishops took measures for suppressing the Pelagian heresy.

By consulting Mr. Palmer's *Antiquities of the English Liturgy*, Mr. Cary's Pamphlet on "*The Apostolical Succession in the Church of England*," (Talboys, Oxford,) Law's *Letters to Hoadley*, and Leslie on *Episcopacy*, (works that may be procured at a very trifling cost,) the reader may

APPENDIX.

obtain very valuable information on the subject of the apostolical succession in the Church of England.

A.D.	A.D.
597 Augustin ^a .	871 Ethelred.
604 Laurence.	891 Plegmund.
619 Mellitus.	923 Athelm.
624 Justus.	925 Wulfhelm.
634 Honorius.	934 Odo.
654 Frithona or Deusdedit.	959 Dunstan.
661 Theodore ^b .	988 Ethelgar.
690 Berhtwald ^c .	989 Sigeric.
732 Tatwin.	994 Elfric ^d .
735 Nothelm.	1006 Elphege or Elfea
742 Cuthbert.	1013 Living.
759 Bregwin.	1020 Agelnoth, or E
763 Eanbert.	noth.
793 Ethelhard.	1038 Edsy.
807 Wulfred.	1050 Robert of Jumieg
830 Feologild.	1052 Stigand.
830 Ceolnoth.	1070 Lanfranc ^e .

^a Seven Bishops of the British Church in council refused to acknowledge Augustine for their metropolitan.

^b Consecrated at Rome by Vitalian. During his episcopate part of the Anglo-Saxon Church which had been converted by English and Scottish missionaries, and which had hitherto followed the custom of the eastern and ancient Gallic Churches, was compelled to receive the rule for the Easter observed by the Church of Rome. Still the Church remained free till fifty-six years after the Conquest.

^c Aldhelm, Bede, and other learned Saxons translate the Bible and Gospels into the language of the country.

^d Elfric translated portions of the Old Testament into Saxon.

^e William the Conqueror and his successors introduced foreign prelates into the Church of England, and through the influence, though these princes were generally disposed to maintain their authority both in Church and State, the encroachments of the pope continued to increase.

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A.D.	A.D.
1093 Anselm.	1294 Robert Winchelsey.
1114 Ralph of Seez.	1313 Walter Raynold.
1122 William of Corboil ^f .	1327 Simon Mepham.
1138 Theobald ^g .	1333 John Stratford.
1162 Thomas Becket.	1349 Thomas Bradwardine.
1171 Richard.	1349 Simon Islip ^l .
1184 Baldwin.	1366 Simon Langham.
1191 Reginald Fitz-Jocelin.	1368 William Whittlesey.
1193 Hubert Walter.	1375 Simon Sudbury.
1207 Stephen Langton ^h .	1381 William Courtney.
1229 Richard Wethershed.	1390 Thomas Arundel.
1234 Edmund ⁱ .	1414 Henry Chichely.
1245 Boniface.	1443 John Stafford.
1272 Robert Kilwarby.	1452 Joseph Kemp.
1278 John Peckham ^k .	1454 Thomas Bouchier.

"The Bishop of St. David's exercised all the branches of metropolitan authority till the reign of Henry I., who upon subduing the country forced the British Churches to submit to the see of Canterbury."

^f William of Corboil establishes the power of the pope by becoming his legate. See Churton's *Early English Church*, chap. xix. p. 306.

^g "In 1152 the Roman pontiff acquired ordinary jurisdiction over the Irish Churches, when at the Synod of Kells, the four Archbishops for the first time received palls from Rome." Palmer's *Treatise on the Church*, vol. i. p. 549.

^h The power of the pope advanced to its greatest height under John, who surrendered his kingdom to him, and consented to pay tribute.

ⁱ 1235. Robert Greathead, Bishop of Lincoln, protests against the corruptions of the Church of Rome.

^k The Bible translated into old English about the year 1290. Hampole's version of the Psalter about 1330.

The pope's temporal power effectually checked by the wise laws of Edward I. The Church continued from this time without those shameful invasions of its property which had been going on from the reign of Rufus to Henry III. Churton's *Early English Church*, p. 384.

^l *Wiclif translates the Bible into English, and opposes the Church of Rome.*

APPENDIX.

A.D.	A.D.
1487 John Morton.	1691 John Tillotson.
1501 Henry Dean.	1694 Thomas Tenison.
1503. William Warham.	1715 William Wake.
1533 Thomas Crommer ^m .	1737 John Potter.
1556 Reginald Pole.	1747 Thomas Herring.
1559 Matthew Parker ⁿ .	1757 Matthew Hutton.
1575 Edmund Grindal.	1758 Thomas Secker.
1583 John Whitgift.	1766 Frederic Cornwallis.
1604 Richard Bancroft ^o .	1783 John Moore.
1611 George Abbot.	1805 Charles Manners Sut-
1633 William Laud ^p .	ton.
1660 William Juxon ^q .	1828 William Howley.
1663 Gilbert Sheldon.	1848 John Bird Sumner, the
1678 William Sancroft.	present Archbishop.

A List of the Archbishops of Arles, furnished mostly on the authority of Petrus Saxius, Canon of Arles. See Oxlee's Sermons.

A.D.	A.D.
60 Trophimus, sent by St. Paul.	80 Dionysius. 85 Regulus.

^m The English Church, casting off the usurped authority of the pope, asserts her independence, and reforms her doctrine by the primitive standard. The first Prayer-book in English A.D. 1549.

ⁿ Parker consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury by Bishops Barlow, Scory, Coverdale, and Hodgkin.

In the eleventh year after Parker's consecration, the pope issued a bull, which called upon all who supported his pretensions in England to separate from the Church, and to rebel against the queen.

^o The authorized version of the Bible completed.

^p The peculiar principles of the foreign reformation, which had been gaining ground in the English Church ever since an end had been put to the jurisdiction of the pope in England, came to a head, and, combined with the democratic principle, terminated in the murder of the King and the Archbishop.

^q The King restored, and the Bishops recalled from banishment. The present Prayer-book completed in the year 1661.

APPENDIX.

A.D.	A.D.
106 Felicissimus.	365 Evescentius.
120 Gratius.	380 Concordius.
145 Ambrosius.	392 Constantinus.
170 Martinus.	410 Heros.
180 Ingenuus.	422 Patroclus.
200 Augustinus.	426 Honoratus.
220 Hieronymus.	438 Hilarius.
230 Savitius or Savinus.	449 Ravennius.
245 Marcianus.	468 Leontius.
258 Victor.	493 Eonius.
270 Marinus. Presided at the first Council of Arles, when the three English Bishops were present.	502 Cæsarius.
316 Martinus second.	542 Auxanius.
330 Nicasius.	546 Aurelianus.
345 Valentinus.	556 Sabandus.
354 Saturninus.	589 Suicerius.
	591 Vigilius, to whom Au- gustin bears letters from Pope Gregory.

A List of the Archbishops of Lyons in France, extracted from the work of Jacobus Severtius on the Archbishops of Lyons. See Oxlee's Sermons.

A.D.	A.D.
130 Pothinus, ordained and sent by Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, and Disciple of St. John the Evangelist.	203 Zacharius.
179 Irenæus, a Disciple of Polycarp.	239 Helius.
	254 Faustinus, mentioned by St. Cyprian.
	265 Verus.
	269 Julius, a martyr.
	276 Ptolomæus, a martyr.

APPENDIX.

A.D.

- 304 **Votian.**
- 315 **Maximus.**
- 325 **Tetradius.**
- 340 **Verissimus, present at
the Council of Sar-
dica.**
- 368 **Justus, present at the
Council of Aquileia.**
- 384 **Albinus.**
- 390 **Martinus.**
- 398 **Anthemius.**
- 412 **Antiochus.**
- 420 **Elfridius.**
- 424 **Syractus.**
- 432 **Senator.**
- 434 **Eucherius.**
- 454 **Salonius.**

A.D.

- 460 **Veranus.**
- 467 **Paticus.**
- 491 **Africanus, a martyr.**
- 494 **Rusticus.**
- 499 **Stephanus, a martyr.**
- 506 **Lupinus, a martyr.**
- 509 **Viventicius.**
- 525 **Eucherius.**
- 532 **Lopus.**
- 542 **Leontius.**
- 546 **Suberdes.**
- 552 **Nicethus.**
- 572 **Priscus.**
- 599 **Ethelred, who conse-
crated St. Augustin,
first Archbishop of
Canterbury.**

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

“ EXAMINE YOURSELVES.”

EVERY man needs to hold up a glass to his soul and to look at his spiritual state. And it is not enough to give a mere glance at ourselves now and then, in a loose and hasty way; but we should look closely, look deeply, look even severely into ourselves, lest we should miss any spot or sores or unclean parts, and do an imperfect slovenly work. He who is about to be tried by an earthly judge goes over his case beforehand many times with himself, puts it in every light, sees how it all looks, studies it part by part, examines the weak points and the strong, again and again turns it over in his mind, that he may not overlook a single circumstance nor forget what he really did.

Shall we do less than this or act less carefully, when we believe that we shall soon be standing before the great Judge of all mankind, soon giving strict account of all our earthly life, soon be *weighed in the balance* by Him who knoweth

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all things, from whom no secrets are hid, who has tracked us through all our paths, and marked every passing momentary thought? Shall we, I say, rush forward into His presence without seeing what we have been about, without enquiring into our state, without stopping to note and see what manner of men we have been?

He who fails to examine, fails to know himself; and he who is ignorant of himself is wholly, utterly unfit for the judgment-seat of Christ. More sins are on the head of such an one than he suspects, more sins have been gathering in his soul than he thinks himself guilty of; he is deeper in debt with God; he has a blacker account against him; as a man who never looks into his worldly affairs, he is more involved, more embarrassed than he reckons. He is farther from God, farther from the peace of God, farther from pardon; for does peace, does pardon, does God's richest and most precious gift drop into the lap of careless men who do not search into their souls, who are not anxious to see how they stand with Him, who are not on the watch to keep out sin, or quick in noting what sin they have committed?

They who desire God's forgiveness, and love to be at peace with God and know the blessed-

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ness and richness of that peace, have sensitive and tender consciences, are always at work to see what weeds are springing up, are continually examining with eager eyes, not merely their outward acts, but their motives, their thoughts, the hidden springs and sources of their outward life. Those who are the most diligent in the scrutiny of themselves are the first to confess that with all their watchfulness, all their keenness in self-examination, a multitude of sins, faults, errors, infirmities, escape their gaze, slip past without observation, and secretly wound the soul, like subtle poison tainting the blood without so strongly discolouring it as to catch the eye. Many thoughts, for instance, hurry too quickly through the soul and flow too quickly upon each other to be caught and marked by the most practised searcher of the soul; and the memorable exclamation of the saint of old, baffled in his endeavour to be thoroughly acquainted with his own sins, gives a humbling lesson to the best of us; "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults."

If saints ever striving, ever labouring to judge themselves, that they may condemn themselves, and *self-condemned* may obtain a merciful judg-


ment from the Lord, have their hosts of unmarked, unknown, unnoticed sins, what must be their state who never weigh themselves in the scale of their own conscience, who toss their days behind their backs as if they were not to be stopped and searched! Can such men know in any degree how deeply their days are stained with sin? Can such men have any true notion of their state in the sight of God? When we fail to face ourselves the gulf widens fast between ourselves and Christ; the shore retreats; the waves of sin steal in upon the land, and wear it away piece by piece; there is a slow, an unperceived, but not less sure destruction going on.

We must have inward communings with ourselves, strict searchings of the inner man, anxious observation of all the movements of the soul, bold, deep soundings of the heart and life, if we would prepare ourselves for Christ's judgment, or keep the power of sin at bay, or prevent the weeds thickening and choking up the ground. If there is any dread of sin, any fixed desire to keep it down, any strong sense of His redeeming love who hateth all iniquity, we shall not be able to rest without frequent examination of ourselves. *The soul that desires to cleave to Christ, to hold communion with God, to walk with God, to be*

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the abode of the Holy Ghost, will be always, as it were, opening the door to see if any dust has gathered upon the floor, if any sin has stolen in, if even through the crevices of the soul any evil has found its way. The earnest Christian knows the difficulty of conquering any single sin that has been allowed to grow and gather strength, and the quickness of its growth in an unguarded soul ; and hence it is his continual work to note the first turn, however slight, from the law of Christ, the first step, however slight, into forbidden ways, the first evil imagination, however slight, that Satan whispers into the ear.

Without self-examination we must get involved in sin ; it will make growth and spread forth its boughs and darken the soul more and more. An unsearched and unexamined heart will not be a pure heart ; and worse than all, unless we break out into the more desperate and blacker forms of vice we shall be unconscious how far we have strayed from God, how far we are separating ourselves from Christ, how far we have gone in the devil's ways and got into his power. Sin does not always blow a trumpet and tell us when it has come into the soul ; we slide down by degrees into evil ways ; we sink little by little. The devil does not lead us into great



seem to ourselves to be making no great
for the worse. To-day seems no worse
yesterday. We do not jolt down steep
but descend by a smooth and gradual slope
the while sin is gathering upon sin, the
increasing, the colour deepening into
shades, the light departing, no sudden
transition from night to day that would alarm
but the slow march of darkness, the slow
advance of the powers of darkness.

This is Satan's course. He leads us gradually
away from God, and he seeks to turn us
from all careful searching of our souls,
should find the evil seeds that he has so
beginning of evil from which he hopes
in time abundant fruit. He who rears

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daily increase of their sins ; they appear to be no worse this year than they were the last, or last year than they were the year before ; they are not conscious how quickly the score against them is on the rise ; they seem to walk on the same level as they have been wont to do. This, I say, is Satan's course. He tries to hide us from ourselves, to turn us away from the survey of our own lives, to make us see things without us but not within, to keep us strangers to ourselves.

Oppose yourselves then, I beg you, to Satan's course ; be the more careful to dive anxiously into your own ways of life, your thoughts, your motives, your words, your deeds, because the devil desires you to live without self-examination. We cannot continue in one stay ; we are in constant motion, motion towards hell or motion towards heaven. If then we have any love, any care for our own salvation, should we not plainly examine our ways, plainly ask ourselves along which way we move, which way we are upon, to which side we sway, for what prince we fight, the prince of darkness, or the Prince of peace ? Only own that we have not stopped to enquire where we are, what we are, *how we stand with God, what our spiritual*

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condition is upon the whole; only let us be in the dark as to the general tenor and character of our life, and we may be sure that we are fast losing ground, we are sinking into the quick-sands, it may be with a noiseless, but a fast descent; we shall soon be overwhelmed unless we rouse ourselves and examine our ways.

We may not after all, nay, we cannot have a precise, perfect view of our own case, of our own condition; we may judge ourselves too gently or too sternly; we may exaggerate the sinfulness of some actions, or underrate the sinfulness of others; we may place ourselves in too high or too low a scale; but still strict, bold, conscientious self-examination will give us some notion of the *general* colour of our life; we may mistake the shades of the colour, but we shall know whether we are *on the whole* striving to know Christ and to learn the mind of Christ, or whether we are on the whole treading the way of death. The compass may not be quite true; there may be some dust, some imperfection to clog its motion; but we shall have some sort of knowledge of our course; we shall know whether our vessel goes north or south.

And yet let us not be content with looking *back* upon our track, once or twice in our lives.

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If we only look back at long intervals, when the greater part of our conduct has become obscure and indistinct through the very distance of time, when the treacherous memory fails to recall any but a few of the greater or more striking acts, when we can but behold our past journey in a vague and hazy way, we do little good. Such a course is the mere shadow, the mere pretence of self-examination. We cannot know ourselves if we have no more than faint recollections of things long past. It is not enough to take these distant views of our life. We must look closely; and to see well, we must look often. Self-examination, to do its work, must not be a rare or an occasional, but a frequent and continual act. Our Lord Himself instructs us in the *daily* examination of ourselves when He bids us daily to pray for the forgiveness of our daily sins; when there is a daily prayer for forgiveness, there must be a daily view of the things which need forgiveness. Every night before you lie down to sleep I would advise you to think over the actions of the day; recollect where you have been, what you have been doing, whom you have talked with, what was your conversation, what you have thought about most. Do this every *evening before your evening prayers, and you*

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will be taking the best means of marking own state and progress in spiritual things; checking the growth of particular sins, of bringing sin down, and of preserving yourse purity and holiness of life.

So also before receiving the Lord's Supper you should make still more careful search of your own state. Every day during the week previous to the reception of this heavenly food you should perform an act of self-examination and of confession of sins; for if you take pains to know yourself and to own your sin to God, you are more likely to be brought to fruitful communion with your Saviour, and to draw life and strength from the blessed Sacrament of His body and blood.

So also at the end of the year, and on your birth-day, or the day of our Confirmation, or any other great occasions, we should do well to pause and examine ourselves.

Soon shall we be judged by the Lord Himself; soon will the world pass away; soon shall we render up the account of our stewardship. Shall we not therefore be careful to judge ourselves, that we be not condemned by the Lord? Shall we not make haste to get our souls ready for the coming of our Lord? Shall we not

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to obtain pardon for all our sins through the virtue of our Saviour's blood, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment?

Let me, in conclusion, repeat some good words of a good Bishop of our Church, who has long since gone to his rest in Christ; "A daily or frequent examination of the parts of our life will interrupt the proceeding, and hinder the journey of little sins into an heap. For many days do not pass the best persons, in which they have not many idle words or vainer thoughts to sully the fair whiteness of their souls, some indiscreet passions or trifling purposes. And though God is not extreme to mark what is done amiss, and, therefore, puts these upon the accounts of His mercy and the title of the Cross, yet in two cases these little sins combine and cluster, (and we know that grapes were once in so great a bunch that one cluster was the load of two men;) that is, first, when either we are in love with small sins; or, secondly, when they proceed from a careless spirit into frequency and continuance: for the little indiscretions of our life we may easily keep asunder by our daily or nightly thoughts and prayers; our contrite sighs can scatter such little offences; but then be sure to breathe such accents frequently, lest they knot and combine and

grow as big as the shore and we perish in sand. 'He that despiseth little things shall perish by little and little,' as said the son of Sirach. A frequent examination of our actions will soften our consciences, so that they will become impatient of a heavier load; and he that is used to shrink when he is pressed with a branch of twining osier, will not stand in the ruins of a house when the beam dashes upon the pavement."

*A FEW WORDS FROM A PASTOR TO HIS
FLOCK, ON CHRISTIAN UNITY.*

MY DEAR PARISHIONERS,

I EARNESTLY invite your attention to a few words I would speak to you concerning religious unity. I think it very necessary to address you on the subject, because so many seem to think that unity in religion is of little or no consequence. Our Blessed Lord and His Apostles, when we carefully examine into what they say, most certainly teach a very different doctrine. In speaking to you on the subject, I will ground my remarks on a passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians. In the fourth chapter of that Epistle, St. Paul writes thus; "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope

of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." The Apostle was in prison at Rome when he wrote these words : of this he reminds them, and would make it a reason for their giving more earnest heed to what he would teach them. He first, you observe, exhorts them to cultivate certain graces which are needful for the preservation of unity, and then exhorts them to endeavour to live in unity amongst themselves, and proceeds to give them divers reasons why it is incumbent on them to do so. It shall be my endeavour to explain what he means by unity, and also the arguments he uses to convince them that it is their duty to live in unity.

When St. Paul then speaks of unity among Christians, he clearly means to teach, that all the disciples of Jesus Christ should be outwardly as well as inwardly one. That being of one heart and of one soul they should direct their united efforts against their common enemy, viz. the devil, and do all they could to overthrow his kingdom. He also plainly teaches that if they were not united in the same mind and in the same judgment, or did not act as far as possible as if they were, they were not healthy members

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of Christ, and would not be able to destroy Satan's kingdom. Our Blessed Lord had inculcated this both in argument and in parables. In one instance He asserted, to illustrate this doctrine, that if Satan were divided against himself even his kingdom could not stand. Not that Jesus meant to teach thereby that His own kingdom could be destroyed by divisions; there would be always some who would be faithful and true to Him, but that His kingdom could not exist within them who did not live at peace one with another, who were not outwardly and inwardly one.

Again, He teaches the same in the parable of the sheepfold, and in the parable of the vine and the branches. In this last, He speaks of Himself under the figure of the vine, and of His disciples under that of the branches, and would teach thereby that they should have as intimate and perfect union with Him and with one another, as the branches and stem of a vine through which the same sap flows, have one with another. He teaches the same when He exhorts them to love as brethren, taking it for granted that children of the same father would have but one common interest, and would live in perfect unity and peace together. He has the

same object in view when He puts it into the minds of His Apostles to call His disciples fellow-soldiers and fellow-servants; the former signifying that they are engaged in the same common cause and under the same leader; the latter, that they belong to the same family, and must therefore have feelings in common; and fellow heirs and joint heirs with Christ; teaching by this that they have all a claim on the inheritance of the same elder brother Jesus Christ, and should live together as heirs in common of the same glorious privileges; and lastly, "members of Christ," members of that body of which Christ is the Head.

This latter condition St. Paul illustrates fully in the 12th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, and also in that of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, by comparing it with the natural body of a man: "So we, being many," says he, "are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." To the Corinthians, of whose want of unity he had had but too much reason to complain, he speaks more at large. For, having said, "as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so also is Christ: for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one

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body ;” an argument that would have been sufficient to satisfy an humble mind at once ; he goes on to explain the relation of member to member, and then, having summed up his argument by stating that God had so tempered the body together that there should be no schism in the (human) body, but that one member should have the same care one for another, he concludes by applying the whole to the Christian Church.

Indeed there is no one passage in Scripture which implies that want of outward unity among Christians is of little or no consequence. It would be as much as to say that it would be of no consequence whether the members of a man’s body were in perfect harmony or not. In the above-named Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul asserts that there is but one body, that is, one body or society of Christians ; one Spirit, that is, one Holy Ghost to dwell in that body and animate it ; one God and Redeemer, through whom alone that body had the hope of salvation ; one faith or creed, which must be believed by all who would be saved ; one Baptism, that is, one holy Sacrament of regeneration or admission into Christ’s Church ; one God, their Father, who had adopted them *all* as children. Yet though *all these were but one*, it did not follow that they

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themselves were necessarily one. He rather teaches that they must use great exertion to keep so, that they must endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit. The unity of the Spirit, that is, such an unity as the Holy Spirit of God keeps with the Father and the Son, which is in every respect a perfect unity. They might not indeed be able perfectly to attain to it, but endeavour they must to do so, if through the Spirit they would have fellowship with the Father and the Son.

But perhaps it may be necessary for the instruction of some readers, to be more plain and practical in my application of these several motives for unity, and that with God's help I will now endeavour to be.

First then, St. Paul says, "Keep the unity of the Spirit; there is one body." By this he would have us to understand that though there are many congregations of Christians meeting together in public worship, yet there is but one Church of Christ throughout all the world. We must here remark that at first this body was so small that it could assemble with one accord in one place; but that after a time it so greatly increased that this became impossible. Still, however, Christians were of one heart and of one

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soul, and would have assembled in one place if they could. It was still one and the same body, though larger in dimensions ; and this is proved by the fact, that when a Christian travelled from one city to another, he was received by the Church in every city, and treated as a brother by every Christian therein ; and the same would be the case now if we were of the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Christians would still be of the same communion, though separated by thousands of miles from each other. A Christian of England could not indeed meet regularly for worship in the same assembly with a Christian of Asia, or Africa, or America ; and every Christian in a large town could not meet in the same sacred building. But they would have a perfect fellow-feeling for each other, they would worship God in the same building, if they could ; they would receive the same Sacraments from pastors appointed in the same way, according to Christ's ordinances ; and, in short, would be of one heart and of one soul, for the same Spirit would animate them all.

Observe again ; St. Paul says, "Keep the unity of the Spirit ; there is one Spirit." As if he had said, do not be seduced to separate *yourselves one from another* into sects and

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“Ye not carnal and walk as men?”
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at variance one with another; so
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d peaceable and temperate and
be full, in short, of every good

parties, as if there were many Holy Spirits, and as if persons living under the guidance of different Spirits could be said to be living in Christian unity, for according to the doctrine of the Gospel there is but one Spirit; and persons of different opinions cannot all be guided by that one Spirit. For the Holy Spirit is not divided against Himself, He cannot teach things contrary one to the other, as for example, that it is equally right to baptize infants or not to baptize them. He is the Spirit of love and of a sound mind, and God is not the Author of confusion but of peace. The Spirit is to the Church or body of Christians what the soul is to the natural body of a man, for as the leg has not one soul and the arm another soul, but all the members are animated by one and the same soul, so all true and faithful members of Christ are animated by one Spirit; and partaking of that Spirit, will act together and be at peace one with another, and follow after things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. The Apostle adds, "in the bond of peace," thereby signifying that it was not possible for the unity of the Spirit to exist in enmity and discord. "For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions," says he in another place, (

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Cor. iii. 3,) "are ye not carnal and walk as men?" meaning by men, men in their natural state, who are continually at variance one with another; so that peace among ourselves is absolutely necessary to living in the unity of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit will have nothing to do with those who are not at peace among themselves.

As an additional motive to unity, St. Paul goes on to remind us that we are all called in one hope of our calling. As if he had said, do this for your present calling, or, in other words, the Christian life does not resemble our manner of life in the world. The human family is brought up to many different callings or professions in the world; men have many desires and different objects to pursue. Now your Christian calling is but one; Christians have not many different desires or different objects in view, but one and the same, namely, to obtain an inheritance undefiled in the heavens. Thus every man, though he may not be called to any trade or profession, is called to fulfil the duties of the Christian life. Every man is not called to be a farmer, or a shoemaker, or a shop-keeper, or a clergyman, or a lawyer, but every man is called to be humble and meek and gentle and peaceable and temperate and *charitable*; to be full, in short, of every good

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work. As therefore, says he, you are all called to be the same, to do the same spiritual things, and to travel on the same road to the heavenly Jerusalem, why should you fall out by the way? Surely you should speak of the same thing, and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, and strive together for the one faith of the Gospel. For if you do not, you do not walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. For whereas there is among you envying and strifes and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? Yes indeed, if it were possible to trace the true history of every division in Christ's Church from the time of the Apostles to the present day, depend upon it the same cause would be found to exist in all; a proud and carnal, self-seeking, and self-pleasing mind.

Again, says the Apostle, "Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit, for there is one Lord." As if he had said, the very fact of there being but one Head or Governor of the Church ought to be a convincing proof to you, that there must be but one form of Government therein, but more especially so when we are told that the Lord of the Church appointed certain governors *subordinate* to Himself. As it is written, "He

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gave some, Apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (or building up) the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to the perfect man." He *gave*,—He did not permit men to take authority upon themselves, to govern His Church under Him; for by the same rule that they took authority upon themselves, they might govern in many different ways, as they pleased. No, but He appointed and ordained regular orders, giving them perpetual commission to appoint and ordain others to govern His Church under Him, and in such a way that there might be no schism in the body.

Again, "Keep the unity of the Spirit, for there is one faith." As if he had said, Jesus Christ did not propose different objects for your belief, by believing in any one of which you might obtain salvation, but one only. There is one name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, neither is there salvation in any other. If ye all believe in Him that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life, that He cannot lie nor err nor be deceived, why do you not *show your faith in Him to be sound by dis-*

trusting your own private judgments, and by believing that unity must be necessary because He so earnestly prayed for it, even such an unity as existed between Himself and His Father. Why do you not strive to keep it? Why do you break the peace of His Church for every cause? for every slight difference of opinion? for the sake of some private interpretation of His Word? proving yourselves thereby to be willing rather to believe and to follow the author of variance and discord, than the Author of peace and the lover of concord.

Again, "Keep the unity of the Spirit, for there is one Baptism;" as if he had said, there is but one gate of admission into Christ's Church. Why then after you have entered by that one, do you walk as if there were many different roads from it to the heavenly Jerusalem? Have you no fear that you may choose bye ways, paths that, however beautiful they may be in outward appearance, may lead to destruction? May you not be walking in the bye way of self-deceit, or of pride, or of malice, or of disappointment? Is it not reasonable to suppose that if your Lord had permitted you to differ one from another, to have had many masters, and to walk in ways of your own devising, that He would have

appointed many gates of admission into His kingdom?

“ Finally,” says St. Paul, “ Keep the unity of the Spirit, for there is one God and Father of all.” These words contain a twofold obligation upon you to live together in unity. We may believe him to say in these words, your Lord, as being one God, requires you to worship Him with one mind ; and as being one Father requires His children to be united in brotherly love. The first is the very highest motive to unity, taken from the unity of the Godhead, which our Blessed Lord Himself proposes for an example of unity. “ That all may be one,” said He, “ as Thou Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us.” The second is an appeal to their gratitude and affection, an appeal of endearment, putting them in mind of what God had done for their souls ; how, having been sometimes far off, they were now made nigh by the blood of Jesus ; how, having been once enemies, they were now reconciled to God by the death of His Son ; how, having been aforetime strangers and aliens, they had now received the Spirit of adoption, and were made heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, and might again call Him Father, as *Adam had done before his fall.*

Now are not these the strongest motives to us to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace? Can we possibly bring forward any argument that will weigh against this reasoning of St. Paul? When he entreats us by the mercies of Christ to keep the unity of the Spirit, shall we seek out arguments to excuse and justify disunion? When our Lord and Saviour Himself made the unity of His Disciples the subject of His last earnest prayer to His Father, can we have the heart to make light of divisions, nay, can we dare to do so? Surely those persons take upon themselves a most awful responsibility who either themselves break the unity of Christ's Church, or attempt to excuse disunion in others. They are very bold men who run the smallest risk of displeasing Christ in one way, because they, poor short-sighted mortals, think they may please Him better in another; another of their own planning, as if they knew better than God! This some do under the specious plea of Christian liberty. I cannot perceive the smallest approach to that principle of liberty which they speak of, in the Bible. The liberty spoken of in the Bible is a very different sort of liberty from that which the world calls liberty. *Christian liberty means a freedom from the burden*

A FEW WORDS ON CHRISTIAN UNITY.

some yoke of the Jewish law, a freedom from the yoke of Satan and the bondage of sin and corruption; the being translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God. And it is called the glorious liberty of the children of God, the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free; not a liberty to be independent and to do as we please, but such a liberty as children enjoy under a kind and considerate parent; such a liberty as is in accordance with the duty of honouring and obeying those who are set over us either by the laws of God or man; a duty plainly revealed to us in the Bible.

And now, my dear parishioners, let me in conclusion earnestly exhort you to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Do endeavour to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. Let no one persuade you for any cause to side with those who break into parties and cause divisions. Let no offence, however justly taken, not even against your pastor himself, lead you to do this. Your pastor has his treasure in an earthen vessel. He may be in the wrong, as you may be in the wrong; why run the risk of offending God because he has offended you? *If he has done you wrong, he will have to answer for it before the judgment.*

seat of Christ, and he needs your prayers; but you will not do so great an injury to your own soul as to forsake Christ's Church and join yourselves to a sect because an unworthy minister has given you cause for provocation. You will not do such dishonour to your Lord as to make your own feelings of anger and disappointment a reason for setting at nought the earnest exhortations of Himself and His Apostles.

Again, be humble and meek, and strict over yourselves; but kind and compassionate towards others. Never let your most ardent zeal for the unity of Christ's Church betray you into harsh expressions against those who differ from you. Remember it is God's cause, not yours; beware then how you would advocate His cause with weapons that He Himself would not use. Beware of ridicule; beware of calling men by party names, there is no more sure way to make men persevere in their errors; and be assured that if you do, you are thereby convinced of being no true Christian yourself.

Wishing you heartily farewell,

I am, my dear parishioners,

Your faithful Friend and Pastor.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

A PLAIN CATECHISM ON CONFIRMATION.

1. MEANING OF CONFIRMATION.
 2. THE SCRIPTURE WARRANT FOR CONFIRMATION.
 3. THE BENEFIT OF CONFIRMATION.
 4. THE DUTIES WHICH CONFIRMATION BRINGS WITH IT.
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☞ *If you are looking forward to Confirmation, you should make sure that you know your Catechism thoroughly by heart. You will also do well to read the Confirmation-Service carefully over, several times. You will find it in the Prayer-Book, immediately following the Catechism.*

1. *Meaning of Confirmation.*

Q. WHAT is Confirmation?

A. It is a sacred rite of the Church, to which persons are admitted who have been baptized, and are desirous of becoming partakers of the Lord's Supper.

Q. What does Confirmation *mean*?

A. It implies perfecting,—ratifying,—renewing,—strengthening. There is a *confirming* of many things in Confirmation. The grace given in Holy Baptism is thereby confirmed and renewed. The solemn promise and vow which was then *made is confirmed* and ratified. The good work

which was then begun in the soul, is confirmed and perfected. The Christian himself is confirmed and strengthened.

Q. Is Confirmation a Sacrament?

A. No, not a Sacrament; for we do not read in Scripture that it was ordained by Christ Himself; but it is *connected with* a Sacrament,—namely, with the Sacrament of Baptism.

Q. You say that Confirmation was not ordained by Christ Himself. On what Scripture warrant then does it rest?

A. It rests on the practice of the Apostles of Christ; and it has been observed in the Church throughout all the world, from the beginning until now.

Q. How is Confirmation spoken of in Scripture?

A. It is called the *laying on of hands*,—which is the other name for it in the Prayer-Book.

2. *The Scripture warrant for Confirmation.*

Q. In what places of Scripture do you find this rite clearly spoken of?

A. In the three following places especially:—
(I.) Acts viii. 5. “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

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6. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.
 7. For unclean spirits crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.
 8. And there was great joy in that city
 12. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women
 14. Now when the Apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John.
 15. Who, when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost:
 16. (For as yet He was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)
 17. *Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."*
- (II.) Acts xix. 1. "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having

passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples,

2. He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
3. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.
4. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the Baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.
5. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
6. *And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied."*

(III.) HEB. vi. 1. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God,

2. Of the doctrine of Baptisms, and of Laying

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on of Hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."

Q. What may be fairly gathered from those places of Scripture?

A. Many things. For example, *the necessity* of Confirmation : for S. Paul calls it one of "the principles of the doctrine of Christ : " and S. Peter and S. John would not have gone down to Samaria to confirm the Disciples, if it had not been necessary.

Q. What rite do we find Confirmation attached to, or connected with?

A. With the Sacrament of Baptism, in all three cases.

Q. Who do we learn are the proper persons to bestow it?

A. Bishops,—as successors of the holy Apostles. *Not* clergy of the inferior order : for we find that Philip, the deacon, had no authority to *confirm* ; though (like all other deacons) he *had* authority to *baptize*.

3. *The benefits of Confirmation.*

Q. What effects followed Confirmation in the time of the Apostles?

A. Extraordinary miraculous gifts; as speaking *with tongues*, and prophesying.

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Q. Do the same effects follow Confirmation in the present day ?

A. No, only the *ordinary* gifts of the Spirit follow now.

Q. And what are the ordinary gifts of the Spirit ?

A. They are those which the Bishop prays for in the Confirmation-Service ; namely, the spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the spirit of Counsel and ghostly Strength ; the spirit of Knowledge and true Godliness, and the spirit of God's holy Fear.

Q. What do you suppose are the special benefits bestowed by Confirmation ?

A. (1.) It perfects the grace of Baptism, procuring a greater indwelling of God's Holy Spirit.

(2.) It thereby arms us against temptation, and strengthens us against our spiritual enemies.

(3.) It also confirms us in all virtue, and assists us in holy living.

Q. You said that Confirmation is *connected with* Baptism. What do you mean by that ?

A. I mean that Confirmation completes Baptism, and perfects it. Baptism may be compared to the sowing of seed in the ground ; Confirmation, to the rain in due season which helps to bring the seed to perfection.

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Q. You ascribe these blessings to the laying on of hands by the Bishop. Does the Bishop then *give* the Holy Ghost?

A. No; it is the gift of God. But God imparts the gift at the laying on of the Bishop's hands, in answer to the Bishop's prayers.

Q. Does the act of "laying hands" on a person *mean* anything?

A. Yes. It means that a blessing is prayed for on *that* person. It certifies him also of God's favour, and is a token that God's fatherly hand is ever over him.

Q. Is this manner of blessing a modern thing?

A. By no means. Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph in this manner. (See Gen. xlviii. 8—20.) And it is said that "Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom, *for* Moses *had laid his hands upon him.*" (Deut. xxxiv. 9.)

Q. How did our blessed Lord bestow His divine blessing?

A. In the same way exactly. It is written in the Gospel, (S. Matt. xix. 13,) that there were "brought unto Him little children that He should *put His hands on them, and pray:*" which shows what His *custom* was.—S. Mark (x. 16) adds, that "He took them up in His arms, *put His hands upon them, and blessed them.*"

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Q. What is the great privilege to which Confirmation admits a baptized person ?

A. It admits him to the Lord's Table.

Q. Can you point out any other benefits of Confirmation besides the privilege of coming to the Lord's Supper, and the three special graces you named just now ?

A. Yes. It offers every person an opportunity for breaking away from the bondage of any sinful habit or inclination, and for turning to God,—such as will never occur again. It leads us to more diligent self-examination, and more earnest prayer. It brings the great truths of Religion before us, in a very striking manner; and reminds us specially of our duties as Christian men and women.

4. *The Duties which Confirmation brings with it.*

Q. What is expected, and always supposed, of persons who come to the Bishop for Confirmation ?

A. First, that they are sincerely grieved and sorry for their past sins,—and, with earnest resolves to lead a better life, have implored God's forgiveness of them ;—next, that they know the Catechism by heart, and have been instructed in the doctrine of the two Sacra-

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ments;—lastly, it is especially understood that they are sincerely desirous of becoming partakers of the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.

Q. If a person is growing old, and *has* taken the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, ought he *still* to be confirmed?

A. Yes, certainly : for Confirmation brings its own special grace with it. Each rite of the Church is necessary for its own sake.

Q. Does Confirmation bring any duties with it?

A. Yes, several : for we then, with our own mouth and consent, 'openly before the Church, declare that we do ratify and confirm the solemn vow, promise, and profession which we made (by our Godfathers and Godmothers) at our Baptism. We therefore stand pledged to renounce the devil and all his works ; the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so as not to follow or be led by them :—steadfastly to believe all the Articles of the Christian faith :—and obediently to keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of our life. Those who have been *thus a second time sealed by the Holy Spirit,*

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are bound to particular innocency of life. They should aim at living in such a manner as to be at all times fit and ready to partake of the Lord's Supper.

Q. Can you mention any public duty?

A. Persons who, after Confirmation attend either the Meeting-house, or the Romish-chapel, incur the greater peril by so doing. Their conduct is doubly sinful; for they have shown, by coming to the Bishop for Confirmation, that they *know* the blessing and advantage of Church-membership. They are therefore without excuse, in thus making light of their privilege; and, as far as in them lies, in forfeiting it. Besides which, they are now about to receive the Lord's Supper; and, of course, no one who comes to that blessed Sacrament, can set an example of division within the Church, and be blameless.

Q. May a person escape the duties you spoke of just now, by *putting off* his Confirmation?

A. No, nothing is escaped. A person does but offend God by keeping away. In God's eyes he is bound just as much to keep the promises which were made for him at his Baptism; and he is depriving himself of that supply of spiritual strength which Confirmation procures *to enable him to do so*. Above all, he is

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cutting himself off from the Lord's Supper, which is the highest of Christian privileges,—the chief means of grace,—and 'a blessing unspeakable. So that no man ought to delay his Confirmation, wilfully.

Q. What should be our course then, when a Confirmation is going to be held in the neighbourhood, and we are invited to be partakers of that blessed rite?

A. We should close with the offer gladly; and improve the interval, to the best of our ability, in preparing for the Bishop. We should be doubly watchful over our thoughts, words, and actions: above all, we should seek by frequent, and earnest prayer, to draw down on ourselves a blessing from the Most High; that so, the day of Confirmation may be the beginning of a new life.

During the days of preparation, you will do well to add to your daily prayers the three following collects.

O GOD, whose blessed Son was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life; grant us, we beseech Thee, that, having *his hope, we may purify ourselves, even as He*

is pure, that when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto Him in His eternal and glorious kingdom; where with Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end. Amen.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all them that are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we worthily lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O GOD, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee; Mercifully grant, that Thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE WIDOWER.

RICHARD STEVENS was returning from his daily work as a labourer on a fine evening in March, and, as he passed the gate which led from the lane into the churchyard, he stopped and leaned upon it. The sun was throwing his setting beams upon the windows of the old Church, and they fell too upon a humble grave, over which the green turf sods were freshly laid. Richard leant to rest longer upon the gate than a labouring man, who has home close at hand, usually does, but he was thinking too much of the beloved wife and mother of his children, who was lying under that green tomb, to care, at the moment, for any thing more than the desire he felt of again looking upon her last earthly resting place. A quarter of an hour had passed, when Richard's shoulder was gently touched, and the curate of the parish, Mr. Cotton, said, "I think, Stevens, my man, you had better be at home taking a comfortable supper after your

hard day's work, than lingering here, for in spite of the red sun-set, it is cold."

"Sir," said Stevens, respectfully touching his hat, "you are very good to take any account of me, but the best home you can wish me to be in, is there, under that green turf."

"Why," said Mr. Cotton, "if I could give you and all my flock real release from the troubles of the world, and be sure that they would be exchanged for the blessings of heaven, I should not regret putting you all to rest in the church-yard, but, my good friend, it is not dissatisfaction with the trials of this world that makes us fit to leave it. We must meet, resist, and then humbly wait until it pleases God in His own good time to take us from them. You have two children spared to you, Stevens, what would become of them, if, at this moment, I could lay you by the side of your wife?"

"Ah," said Stevens, "wishing so, I am afraid, is wicked, or else I should say, lay them in the same grave."

"Stevens," said Mr. Cotton, "this repining, and sad distrust of providence is not what I *should* have expected from a man of your character. You mourn for your wife, and it is most *natural*, but you have the consolation of knowing

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that she was almost as dear to all her neighbours as to yourself; that she was respected by high and low; that you yourself were a kind, good, and affectionate husband in the cares of that life from which it has pleased God to set her free."

"Oh Sir," said Stevens, "she was every thing you say, but I was not the good husband you think; often was I unkind and cross, staying out when I might have gone home, and spending when I should have spared! Oh, Mr. Cotton, it's your goodness and kindness that makes me say how this now comes home to me, for not one word that I was not obliged, have I spoke to any creature since she died. I came home, Sir, to meet a great shock; after being away a day and night (I am thankful to say that it was for work and not pleasure), I came home, and found my dear Mary a corpse, and laid out with a dead baby in her arms."

"My good friend," said Mr. Cotton, "I have heard this sad story, and deeply feel for your sorrow, but let me beg you to seek for comfort next to the throne of grace, from the children you have left, two fine promising ones, I know."

"I have not taken much notice of them, Sir, since my loss, but my neighbours have been *very good*."

"Yes," said Mr. Cotton, "that I do not doubt, respected as both you and your wife have been, this is quite probable, but you must exert yourself for their sakes, and recollect that good nature should not be imposed upon, and above all, think of His mercy who has spared to yourself health and strength to support the children, who may, who must be such a consolation and comfort. If you had lost a less worthy partner, could you have thought of joining her in heaven, where we may humbly trust she now is, or dared to think of leading your children in her steps?"

Mr. Cotton in thus speaking of Mrs. Stevens, did not go too far, for she had been one among those excellent of the earth, whom God in His infinite wisdom allows but a short period of sojourn here, and then recalls to Himself. By her influence Stevens had been reclaimed from many of the evil ways into which temptation leads us all, and she had done this with so gentle and kind a sway, that it was not until poor Stevens had lost his valuable monitor, that he was fully aware how mercifully he had been benefited by her control.

"I am going your way, Stevens," said Mr. Cotton, "we will walk together to the turning

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of the lane, where you will see your home, and I shall turn off to the allotments. By the way, Stevens, you have not been there for some time."

"No, Sir, I have no heart to go any where; and when you talk of my home, I cannot but think of the cold, desolate place it is, and don't care to go there."

"Well, really," said Mr. Cotton as they looked at the cottage, which stood with some others at the bottom of the hill, "your home at this moment looks anything but desolate and cold, somebody has got a good fire for you Stevens." And, as they looked, the windows seemed to be a blaze of light.

"Oh," cried Stevens, rushing down the hill, "it is on fire, the children are burning to death!"

Mr. Cotton, half fearful himself of some such calamity, followed with equal haste. When they reached the house, the light was nearly gone. Stevens shook the door, which was locked, as if he would break it open, until Mr. Cotton pointed out the key which was on the outside. When they got in, the little kitchen was deserted, a chair stood by the fire on the hearth, on which some linen was just burning to ashes. "Where are my children?" cried Stevens: "Mary, Joe,

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where are you !” there was no answer, and again the poor man exclaimed “ Mary ! Joe ! ”

“ Here we are father,” said the children, creeping from under the bed in the next room, the boy pushing his sister forward to explain what had happened. “ Father,” said Mary, “ we are very sorry, but we did not mean to burn the shirt and my frock and Joe’s apron, but they caught fire from the great furze bush in the corner of the chimney, and that blazed up all at once as we were trying to make some sticks burn under the kettle. Mrs. Horton came in and washed and ironed the things, and hung them upon the chair, and before she went home raked out the fire, for fear we should get playing with it, but we were not playing with it, we only wanted to make the kettle boil against you came home, like mother used to do.”

Stevens had sat down in a chair ; too thankful to scold, and weakened by grief and the want of proper nourishment, which he had been unable to take for some days, the poor man after taking little Joe in his arms burst into tears. Mr. Cotton, as may be supposed, was truly gratified that no accident had happened to the children, and after begging that Stevens would not forget to thank God for so great a mercy, he left the

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house, determined to take some better timed moment for impressing on the mind of Stevens, how little prepared he had been, if it had pleased God to take him at his word, and deprive him of his children. Mrs. Horton with other neighbours had, it seems, kindly taken charge of household matters since Mrs. Stevens' death, and on this day, after washing and ironing the clothes, had, as Mary said, hung them to air, and then fearful of accident, had carefully, as she thought, raked out all the fire. The kettle which hung on its hook was quite warm, and Stevens she knew could make it boil. She desired the children when they came from school to remain within doors and not go to play; "your father, my dears," said she, "is very low spirited, on account of his troubles, and so when he comes in he will like to find you here, two good quiet children." Mrs. Horton being of the opinion that "safe bind, safe find," was a useful maxim, put it in practice by locking in her little friends, a custom that where there is a possibility of the children getting at fire, is, to say the least, a dangerous one.

A tap at the door some little time after, roused Richard Stevens, who had not even begun to *make his kettle boil*. A little girl came in, say-

ing, "Mother has sent me with this jug of coffee, and such nice bread and butter! Mr. Cotton called at our house and asked me to go with him to the rectory, and mother said I might, and she says she wishes it was beer for your sake, for you want something to cheer you up."

"Tell your mother," said Stevens, "that this coffee will be of much more service to me, for I have taken nothing yet for the day." So Richard and his children made a good meal of the kind present, and before he retired to rest, he humbly thanked God for permitting him to have his children lying by his side instead of by that of their poor mother in the churchyard.

The next morning Stevens went to work with more comfortable feelings, for during the night he had made up his mind to ask a widowed sister with one child, who lived in Scotland, to come and keep house for him. She had written a very kind letter to him when his wife died, and had regretted that they were so far apart. She was a bustling industrious woman, and could earn her board anywhere. "I shall ask Mr. Cotton," thought Stevens, and that gentleman fully approved of the measure, and hoped the next day would bring Stevens to Church. Observing that Richard made no reply, he con-

tinued, "pray come, my friend, to a place where you will be sure to have consolation, even under the trial which you find so hard to bear."

"I am sure, Sir," said Stevens, "I have never turned my back upon the Church in good times or bad, but I must say unless I can come decently I had rather stay away." Stevens did not like to add, that in the fire, which had been the means of making him properly grateful for the blessings yet left to him, he had lost the clothes intended for Sunday's wear.

Mr. Cotton, however, guessed all at once what was passing in his mind, and commended him for his desire to appear decent, for though God looketh not upon the outward man but upon the heart, yet it is our duty to shew all the respect in our power to His holy day and temple. Some kind friend might have guessed that Stevens would not have the usual clean linen for Sunday, for on Saturday, little Peggy Horton came running in with a parcel which contained a shirt for Richard Stevens from a well-wisher, for which Stevens was so thankful that he would not listen to Mrs. Horton's remark, "that they might as well have sent some pinnafores and frocks, seeing as the dear children's things were burnt to a tinder." The friend and well-wisher

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who sent this welcome gift was however one, who had too many claims on his charity to do more than give a little help here and there, but the aid was always of a judicious and well timed kind.

The sister from Scotland with her little boy arrived in due time. "It was a long journey to undertake," said she, "but really the railroads now made it seem so much shorter, that my little Allick was wishing we had walked, for, said he, 'mother, it must be but a bit of a way.'"

Richard and his sister had not met for many years, but now as fellow sufferers, all old affection seemed to revive, and they were as desirous to comfort each other as in their young days when their sorrows were less important, but still as hard to bear.

Aunt Sarah took great notice of the children, and soon found the comfort of succeeding to what had once been the tidiest house in the village. When Mrs. Stevens died, her neighbours took the greatest pleasure in coming to attend to Richard's little household. "Many is the time," said they, "that she, poor dear soul, came to help us, and nobody knew how it was, but she seemed always to have time to give a turn to a neighbour,

and yet never neglect any thing at home." Mrs. Stevens was one who knew the value of time too well ever to waste any in gossiping or meddling with what did not concern her, and so she had always a little to spare for the good of her neighbours. Time and labour, the charity of the poor, are often given with a far more willing spirit than the money of the rich.

When aunt Sarah came down stairs after the first night spent under her brother's roof, she made the fire, and then asked Mary what they had for breakfast.

"Milk and water, aunt, or tea-water, and bread and butter."

"Ah! poor dears, then you have no nice oatmeal or stir-about."

"No," said Richard, who then came in, "we don't much relish pig's victuals in England; but I beg your pardon," said he, seeing his sister look surprised, "I mean we cannot relish as you do in Scotland, what is given to the pigs."

"Oh dear me," said aunt Sarah, "then of course you don't eat potatoes, or turnips, or green stuff?"

"Those are quite different things," said Stevens, *feeling that he had not the best side of the*

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argument; "we are glad enough to eat them whenever we can get them, but all the people in Norfolk, I believe, that live no better than myself, don't like to have oatmeal recommended to them, and yet I dare say it is good enough."

Aunt Sarah was a very good tempered person, so instead of being affronted, she set about giving every body the usual breakfast. Poor Allick looked very gloomily at his piece of bread and scrape and some tea-water, as it is called.

The next morning, when breakfast time came, the children found aunt Sarah with a pot of boiling water hanging over the fire. She then took four large spoonfuls of oatmeal, which she wetted by degrees in a basin, with some skim milk, till a quart of milk was added; she then stirred this briskly into the quart of boiling water which was ready in the pot, and let the whole boil together till it became quite thick, taking care to stir it all the time to prevent it from being lumpy. Of this she gave a basin each to the children, and made no remark when Stevens came and helped himself to a good supply.

"Why, sister," said he, "this is a day of feasting for the children."

"One that they may have every day, if you

like," replied she. "Enough is left in that crock for supper if you choose to have it, and the expense is not equal to what tea, sugar, and bread and butter would have been."

"It seems very satisfying," said Stevens, "and yet I must have a little more, it is so nice."

"I got a little skim milk this morning, a bit of butter or some treacle does as well, but either of these, you would not, after a time, miss. You must not again laugh at our Scotch ways, Richard, and fancy that oatmeal and water is fit for the food only of pigs or of starving people, who can get nothing else. When made with water instead of milk, a pint of beer turned in at supper time, makes it a very strengthening dish, and when I lay in of my dear boy, I was very weakly and can well recollect what a comfort I found it. Oatmeal is excellent, Richard, first stirred gradually into boiling water with a stick, having a little salt sprinkled into it. Boil it ten minutes after the oatmeal is put in, and stir it the whole time to make it keep smooth. If well done, it becomes a solid stiff pudding, and eaten with a little treacle makes a wholesome dinner or supper for children."

This stir-about was not the only dish that *aunt Sarah* introduced to the cottage; her peas

porridge was a very savoury one. A pint and half of shelled green field peas were boiled in two quarts of water till quite tender. Then four spoonfuls of oatmeal were mixed by degrees, with a quart of milk, and stirred into the pot of boiled peas, till the whole mess became quite thick. She then seasoned it with a bit of lard or dripping, and a little pepper and salt. Sometimes she used twelve good sized leeks or onions instead of the peas, and Richard, on the whole, liked it better.

A very cheap dish and a nourishing one too was made, excepting the split peas, entirely from the produce of Richard's allotment. A quart of split peas were soaked in cold water for twelve hours, as in fact peas always should be before they are cooked. They were then put in a saucepan, with seven quarts of water. Carrots, onions, turnips, celery, cut up small, with thyme, mint, and parsley, were fried in a pan with two ounces of lard for a quarter of an hour. These vegetables were then poured into the pot with the peas, and the whole boiled until the peas were quite soft. Pepper and salt was then added, and a savoury dish was ready at a trifling expense. Aunt Sarah's cabbage soup was much liked by the children. To make this she chose

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a fine large cabbage, and cut it into very small bits with a quart of water. To this she put a handful or two of potatoes chopped also very small, a bunch of sweet herbs, an onion or two, and about two ounces of good lard or fat bacon. This was boiled for three or four hours, and when ready, poured into basins in which some slices of bread had been put, cut into squares.

But we must now return to Richard, who, on the evening of the day after his sister arrived, said he should go and see after his allotment. "The loss of my poor Mary kept me away at first, and now I am got behind in every thing. You cannot think what a pleasure she took in that place," said Richard. "Of a moonlight night we have been there till nearly ten o'clock."

"I must go with you," said aunt Sarah, "and I hope you will make Allick useful, for he is strong and willing enough to be handy."

"Mary used to tell me," said Stevens, "that Joe was getting his hand in to be so, but we set him to weed, and he pulled up the young carrots instead of the weeds, so he has not done much of late."

"But father," said Joe, "mother shewed me the difference between the weeds and the carrots, and you forget, that with Mary's help, I have

got quite a little heap of scrapings from the road, and we have put them in the place where poor mother told us ; she used to save the wood ashes and the dead leaves, and the stalks that our pig did not eat, and mix it up with lime, and sometimes we had quite a great heap, aunt Sarah."

"The pig was killed," said Mary, "and father says he has no heart to buy another, but I wish he would."

"Why yes," said Richard, "I think I must see about it, for there is no sound so cheerful as the grunt of a pig, and the stuff from the allotment nearly fed our last."

"You must tell me a little about the allotments, Richard," said aunt Sarah, "for I never heard of such things till I came here."

"Why it is just this," said Richard. "The greater number of farm labourers are now married men in these parts, at weekly wages regulated by the price of bread ; well, these, with a boy or two, who sleep in the farm-houses, do all the principal and regular work. The gentleman to whom the best part of the parish belongs has improved our circumstances greatly, by allotting to each cottage a bit of garden ground a quarter of an acre in size, and for this we pay 10s. a year ; the rules I have got by

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heart, and they are these; Rent to be paid punctually; the land to be cultivated with the spade only; no crop of any kind to occupy more than half the land; crops to be varied so as not to injure the land; no under letting or exchanging; no injury to fences, which we are expected to keep in order; no Sunday work; families expected to attend the parish Church, send their children to school, and abstain from drunkenness.

“ Our landlord gives two prizes of 7*s.* 6*d.* for the best cultivated allotments, and three prizes of 5*s.* worth of seeds for the three next; the umpire is chosen out of the tenants. Last year I got one of the first prizes, and it set me up in seeds, besides buying little Joe’s barrow for the road scrapings. When the allotments were first portioned we were all at a loss how we should get garden tools, seeds, and such like, but our landlord is one that helps a poor man to help himself, and he lent a good many of us a little money, which we were to pay back as we could, and though it took some time, yet he never lost a farthing. I was very thankful to borrow 10*s.*, for I had a bad rheumatic fever that sadly put us back, though Mary had contrived to lay by a *little stock of money by her knitting.* She was

one, Sarah, who always kept her knitting bag about, and so a spare minute was never wasted. She kept us all in stockings, and sold some besides. Knitted stockings, you see, are so much stronger than what you can buy."

"She seems, indeed," said aunt Sarah, "to have been a most careful industrious woman."

"Yes," said Richard, "I knew what she was before I married her, which I would have done two years before I did, but she would not consent. 'Even poor gentlemen,' said she, 'Richard, don't marry early, because they know that if they did, their children would become beggars, and you must follow the same rule, and not marry till your wages will enable you to support a wife and family. No man has any right to expect that the public will support his family, except in the case of illness or death; and if he cannot support a family by his wages, he should remain single till he can.' And then I told her she was very wise, but not very kind; and she was much hurt, and said that all she knew on the subject she had learned from her mistress. And a good mistress she was to Mary, and long after we were married she used to come in like a friend, and give her advice. It was she who begged me to belong to the burial club, and

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paid the shilling for entrance. Afterwards we paid a shilling to it when any member died, and so my dear Mary was buried decently, without having much help from the parish, and the board said it was very creditable to me. Ah, they should have said to her, Sarah."

"It was creditable to both," replied his sister, "and a comfort it must be for you to look back upon the pleasant time you have spent together, for I can guess that you never had many disagreements, your children agree too well for their father and mother to have had much wrangling."

"We never had a downright quarrel that I can call to mind," said Richard, "and if ever I came home feeling cross like, for I am down-hearted sometimes, Mary used to say, 'Come Richard, it takes two people to make a quarrel, and I am determined not to be one of them.'"

"You are apt to be down-hearted, Richard," said his sister, "and sometimes this seems like discontent with the measure of worldly prosperity which God has thought fit for you to have. The Scripture requires us to be diligent in our calling, not slothful in business, but when we are exerting ourselves for our own support, *and that of our family in the fear of God, and*

in dependance on His blessings, we are also to be contented with that share of the good things of this world which He thinks fit to give us, and to receive all His favours with thankful hearts, and bow in submission when He afflicts us, knowing that if we desire to love and serve Him, ‘all things will work together for our good.’ This, my dear brother, is as far as I can recollect what a good clergyman said to me, when it pleased God to take away my dear husband, and the words seemed to enter my mind, so that I shall never forget them.”

“They deserve to be remembered,” said Richard, “and I am thankful that you can remind me so well of what is the duty of us all. But even in little things, Sarah, I know I am apt to despond, and I will tell you a circumstance that will prove not only how ready I am to give way to fretting, but also how unprofitable it is. .

“The first year I had the allotment the frost destroyed all the early crops of peas throughout the country, mine of course among the number; I took it to heart so much, that I fretted and could hardly bear to go near my plot of ground. One day I went across to Thomas Owen, who was at work in his allotment, and I said, ‘Ah neighbour, how unfortunate we have been, do

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you know I have done nothing but fret ever since. But you seem to have a fine healthy crop of peas coming up already, what are these?' 'These!' cried Thomas, 'why these are what I sowed immediately after my loss.' 'What, coming up already?' said I. 'Yes, while you were fretting, I was working.' 'What,' said I, 'don't you fret when you have had a loss?' 'Yes,' said he, joking like, 'but I always put it off until after I have repaired the mischief.' 'Why then,' said I, 'you have no need to fret at all.' 'True,' said Thomas, 'and that's the very reason I put it off!' That man," continued Richard, "makes more of his allotment than any of us, and I set it down to his patience, perseverance, and being always ready to learn from others; he is always trying some new plan, that is to say, when it is recommended by those who know better than himself; one time it is brine from the bacon tubs, which he gets at the farm where he works, and which he found capital to mix with the manure; another time he tries dry soot on his onion and turnip beds, and he set us all the example of cutting turf sods from the common, chopping them small, and digging them in *green*, it was as valuable as a load of dung. At first we used to wait and see how

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his plans answered, but now, whenever he starts any thing new, there are plenty to follow his example. The last of his plans was watering his carrots with lime water to destroy the worm. It was he gave me the advice about my potatoes; 'Choose,' said he, 'the champion or early Shaw, or any similar new sorts, or any potatoe that succeeds in the district. The same sort never thrives long in one place, and therefore new sorts are necessary. Keep them,' said he, 'for a winter vegetable, they are an expensive summer luxury for the cottage, cabbages are always at hand, and always useful.' He has grown sea kale for two years past, and says that it is a mistake to think it is only intended for the garden of gentlefolks. The covering up with dung is only necessary when it is desired to have it early, in its natural season it only wants to be kept from the light, and this he does with old baskets, pots, or boxes. The plants will last many years, and are an excellent sweetener of the blood in the spring, keeping the doctor away from the door."

"Really," said Sarah, "you must take me to see Thomas Owen, for I am very much like him in one respect; I am very fond of trying experiments myself. Live and learn is a good *maxim* for us all."

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“ I find,” said Richard, “ that we must not spend any more time in talking, that is, if we wish to get to the allotments while it is daylight. However, I feel that my conversation has done me good, for I am ashamed to think how I have let this fine weather slip away, and instead of doing all I could, have done only what I was obliged, and that, too, with a repining spirit, for which I humbly hope God will forgive me.”

When Richard and his sister reached the allotments she was quite surprised at the busy scene which met her view. Men, women and children were there, scattered all over the large piece of ground, and each seemed to be busily employed. Even the youngest could pick up stones, and carry them to the barrow, or hold the bag of seeds ready for sowing. The elder ones fetched water from a little stream at hand, a task which they took great pleasure in, and happy was he who had an old watering pot, however leaky it might be. One little fellow was at the moment employed on Richard Stevens' piece of ground. And what was the surprise of its owner, when he found that his little garden was in as good order as if it had received his usual daily care. The beds of carrots and turnips and onions were weeded,

the cabbages and potatoes hoed, and the peas and beans which Richard had left under-ground, were now coming up in luxuriant green rows; he felt quite proud to shew his property to his sister. His fellow-labourers, by whom he was much respected, had taken pity on his allotment, and by giving a half hour in turn to its cultivation, had thus done Stevens a real benefit, for which he lost no time in thanking them most heartily, determining to be always on the look out to do something for them in return. Such opportunities of helping each other often occur in Richard's rank of life, and form a bond of friendly union, which helps to lighten the hardships of many a household.

Aunt Sarah was one who fully entered into such neighbourly feelings, and soon became a great favourite with every body in the village; her presence soon restored comfort into poor Richard's little dwelling, and though he never ceased to regret his wife, yet he became less desponding, and more thankful for the blessings spared to him in his children. On them the early training and good example of their mother had made an impression, which he and their good aunt took care should never be effaced.

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REPENTANCE.*

I COME to you in Christ's Name ; I stop you ; I lay my hand upon you ; I could even kneel down before you and pray you to hear my words ; for I see in you one for whom Christ has died, one for whom blood has been shed, even Christ's most precious blood, and for whom Christ, as the Man of sorrows, has sorrowed even in an agony till the blood fell in great drops from His holy flesh. Yes, you have been loved with divine, everlasting love ; and yet what have you done ? How have you lived ? What have you thought of Christ's love ? What have you thought of your own soul ? Have you not lived carelessly ? Have you not forgotten God ? Have you not fallen into countless sins ?

Alas, you have greatly sinned ; you have lived in sin ; have gone on from day to day as if there were no death, no judgment, no hell ; as if you were going to live for ever here on earth, as if there were no Judge coming to judge you for *your deeds*.

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And yet it is most true that every single sin is written down in the Book of God, every sin you have ever done stands against you, every sin is noted down. Whatever you did in secret, when no one was near to see, even your evil thoughts, your evil wishes, are all known to the great, the mighty, the everlasting God, who hateth iniquity. Your steps have been tracked all your life ; all is known ; all has been seen ; God has been with you in every place, has heard every word you ever spoke, seen every deed you have ever done, traced every thought that has ever passed through your mind. Surely it is awful to think of this. If you have to be judged, what can you say, how can you defend yourself ? Just think over with yourself what sort of a life you have been leading in time past, and then consider whether you would like to tell it all out before the Great Judge of all mankind, before our Lord Jesus Christ. You may try to drown thought ; you may turn away from all such things ; you may say to yourself, “ I will enjoy myself while I can ; I will eat, drink, and be merry ; I will wait till I am ill and old before I think about my soul ; but this, I say, most solemnly, most earnestly, this, I say, as your friend, is madness. Is not a man mad,

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who in a very grievous sickness says to himself, "I am not in any great pain yet, therefore I will not send for my doctor; I will try to forget that I am sick; I will enjoy myself as long as I can; I will not alter my ways; I will not think; I will not listen to people who tell me I am ill?"

O, my friend, I beseech you to listen to me; do hear me; do be a friend to your own self while you have got the time. Do not fling away your soul; do not toss yourself with your own hands into hell; do not choose death; do not choose destruction and the place of devils. "Why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." Only think of these words, these very pressing, these very gracious words; "why will ye die;" "turn yourselves, and live ye." It is not a man who says this, but your Lord God Himself; God speaking from heaven bids you turn; His divine voice calls after you as you go on your evil way; He seeks you out as a lost sheep in the wilderness; He finds you, He draws near to you, He presses you to return to the Bishop and Shepherd of your soul; for *as you have been once baptized, you were once*

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His ; you became a son ; you were made by Christ's blood a child of God ; by the Sacrament of Baptism you were engrafted into Christ's body ; hence, even yet you are His ; hence, He seeks you as one of His stray children, not as a stranger, not as an alien, not as one who has never dwelt in His House, but as a son whom He has loved, as a son whom He has longed after, as a son whom He has missed from His spiritual house ; yes, as a prodigal son who has dishonoured his Father's Name, who has torn himself from his heavenly Father's loving sway, whom the Father still longs to fold to His bosom once again.

Suppose you will not turn, what must happen ? Surely sin will not go unpunished ; your sin will find you out ; divine vengeance will overtake you at the last, though for a time you may enjoy yourself and do well. Hear how holy David speaks : I see the ungodly in great prosperity, they are in no misfortune like other folk, neither are they plagued like other men. So far, all looked bright ; the ungodly seemed to thrive in their ungodliness ; but how end David's thoughts ; though he was tempted to say, In vain have I washed my hands in innocency, yet he went into the House of God, and he learned the

end of these men. "Oh," he exclaimed, "how suddenly do they consume, perish, and come to a fearful end, like as a dream when one awaketh, so dost Thou make their image to vanish out of the city." Yes, though you may seem for a time no worse for your sins, yet the fire now smouldering will break out at last ; " be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Day by day you are heaping up fuel round your own soul, and the heap rises higher day by day ; in a moment a spark will set all in flames ; the Lord will kindle that fire which never can be quenched. O how fearful to be lost ! How terrible to feel yourself sinking into the lake of fire, into those scorching waves ! What unutterable anguish will overwhelm you, if you should at last be condemned, if at last your Saviour should say, " Depart from Me," " I know you not !" Will you not at that time wish all your days back ? Will you not then long to have your life over again ? Will you not give worlds to have this very week, this very day, which you think so little of now ?

O turn, turn and live ! O flee, thou sinner, from the wrath to come ; it is not too late ; you *can still cast yourself at the foot of the Cross ;*

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the door of mercy is not yet shut, nor the way of pardon closed; arise, and go to your Father, and say that you have sinned; prolong not the time; wait not a single day; at once begin your repentance; at once hear the voice of your merciful Lord; do not reject it; do not turn away your ear; do not say, "Come to me at a more convenient season;" hear God when He calls, else He may not hear you when you call. What awful words are those written in the Book of Proverbs! First, indeed, come good and gracious words; first there is the call to repentance. "Turn you," says God, "turn you at My reproof: behold, I will pour out My Spirit upon you, I will make known My words unto you." But as if this exhortation had failed, as if He were speaking to some who would not turn, He goes on to say, "Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer; they shall seek Me

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early, but they shall not find Me ; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord. They would none of My counsel, they despised all My reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices."

Did men ever repent of repenting? Nay, how blessed, how merciful a thing it is that repentance can avail, that there is a way of return to the sinner, that the sinner is pressed to return, that the stray sheep is suffered to come back. Such is the virtue of the Cross, such the power of our Saviour's blood, that though you may have gone ever so far from God, lived ever so long in sin, yet even now there is hope ; even now, if you earnestly seize upon the time and humble yourselves to the dust, the offer of pardon is held forth. Can you hesitate? What will all these pleasures or all these gains that dazzle your soul profit you on your death-bed? Think of your death-bed ; that is the day of trial ; while you are in the midst of life you may forget the woe that sin brings at last, but you will soon be a dying man, your breath failing you, your eyes growing dim, your soul ready to break forth from your body, your body *ready to sink* into the grave. God knows how

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soon all this may happen to you ; we only know that to all of us “ the time is short,” “ the Lord is at hand ;” our flesh is not as brass ; we shall soon be dying ; our graves will soon be opened, our coffins soon made ready, and we shall go from the light of the world, from the sun and the cheerful day, from our friends, our kindred, our gains, our pleasures. Then, then your sins, unless they have been repented of, will break out into a devouring flame ; then your soul will find the torment which your present way of life is preparing. Once more then, by the mercies of Jesus Christ, by the long-suffering of God, I beseech you to turn and repent ; repent in this accepted time ; repent before the day of grace has gone ; repent while God calls you to repentance ; cast yourself on God’s mercy ; plead for pardon in your Saviour’s Name ; bow yourself to the dust before the most pure God, whom in time past you have grieved and angered, whom you have despised and disobeyed, but who even yet opens wide the arms of His mercy that He may receive you back and embrace you, and not drive you out of His presence as a reprobate and a cast-away. O my friend, repent, repent !

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

COMFORT TO THE PENITENT.

ARE you out of heart about your salvation? Do your sins sit so heavily upon your soul that you are almost without hope? Does your conscience bring strong accusations against you, so as almost to crush you and beat you down to the earth? Do you seem to yourself to have sinned too long or too deeply to be forgiven?

It is indeed a fearful thing when we wake up and hear all our sins crying out against us, when we see all our transgressions witnessing against us, when we recollect all our wasted opportunities and our wasted warnings, our contempt of God, our crucifyings of Christ, our reckless and guilty ways, our bold and frequent violations of Christ's will, our stubborn perseverance in iniquity, our long indulgence of many hurtful lusts and passions, our forgetfulness of our heavenly Father's love, and of our Redeemer's sufferings, and of the many pleadings of God the Holy Ghost who has oftentimes

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sought to hold us back from sin, who has often, with "a still small voice," urged us to return to the Bishop and Shepherd of our souls. It is an awful thing to wake up and see how vile we are, how polluted, how far from God, how sunk in sin, how stained, how spotted with the world, especially when with all this strong overwhelming consciousness of our sinfulness in God's sight, we have also strange, awful thoughts of death, of judgment to come, of Christ's second coming in glory, of hell, of God's vengeance on sinners at the last day. All these thoughts are very terrible, very overwhelming. We seem quite stricken down; the fear of death comes upon us; we dare not look up; all is darkness and blackness around us; self-accused, self-condemned, we lose all heart; we sit, as it were, on the ground and weep; we doubt whether we can be saved; we are well nigh inclined to think we are past hope, and that God must have numbered us amongst the reprobates.

Now if you are thus smitten, my friend, with this deep sense of your sins, and are in this great bitterness of soul, if you are ready almost to despair, let me come to you in Christ's Name and speak to you the words of God; and in *Christ's Name*, that most blessed Name, whereby

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alone we can be saved, I charge you not to give yourself over to despair. I tell you that there is *hope*; the hope may be faint; it may be slight; it may be very small; but still, I say, there is some hope; the darkness of utter condemnation has not settled on you; imprisoned though you may be, and fast bound in sin, you are among "the prisoners of hope;" for the final wrath of God, the vengeance of the last day, has not fallen on you. There may be but a little streak of hope in the sky, or perhaps the darkness may not be the midnight darkness, but rather that dusky twilight as when Mary went to the sepulchre, but still, even this is some change for the better; there is some token for good, even if while it is still dark, the darkness is not so thick.

For I would ask you this, How is it that you have come to feel the burden of your sins? How is it that you begin now to feel that you have sinned, that you are in a perilous case, that you have been a false son to your heavenly Father, a false soldier to the Captain of your salvation, a false disciple of your most loving Lord? There was a time when you sinned without feeling it, when your conscience did not prick or sting; you went on day after day, week after week, without *any fear for your soul, without any dread of the*

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judgment to come, without any thought or care what you were about. How, I ask, has this change come over you? How is it that you have been awakened as from a sleep and now see your danger? Surely, my friend, the voice of divine love, the voice of the Spirit of God, has sounded in your ears, has startled you from your sleep. It must be God who has opened your eyes, who has shewn you your wounds and sores, who has given you these fears of death, who has roused you from that dead and torpid state, who has quickened you, who has made you feel yourself a rebellious child, a wanderer from the fold, a backslider, a worthless, fruitless branch, deserving to be cut off.

Though even now you may have much cause for fear, yet you were in a far more fearful state when your sins did not oppress or torture you, when you did not know your guilt; you have now some ground for hope. You can, at least, say that you are beginning to see yourself in the true light, however defiled and deformed your own soul may appear to be. For this beginning of self-knowledge, of consciousness of sin, you may fall down on your knees and bless God; you may bless Him that He has given you this *sight* of yourself, fearful as it is, while you are

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yet living in the world. For while you are in the world, is it not possible to repent? Is it not possible by God's grace to forsake the sins of which you repent? Is there not balm for the conscience-stricken? Is there not hope for the contrite heart? Is there not in the Gospel the great and blessed doctrine of repentance? Is there not a place in the Church of Christ for the penitent, for the returning prodigal, for the wanderer who seeks with abashed soul his former home? O yes, for the penitent there is hope. When the tears of shame and self-reproach run down the sinner's cheek, when his heart heaves within him with sincere sorrow for his transgressions, when his spirit droops and sinks, and sin like a load weighs him to the earth, the angels of heaven shout for joy, for he has taken the first great step towards pardon.

Think not then that you are past hope. If you are indeed oppressed with the weight of your own past misdeeds, if they are as a burden too heavy for you to bear, then hear the voice of God calling you to Himself; "Come, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "Come unto Me all ye that labour

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and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”
“ Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” Thus the Lord speaks; thus His words, sweeter than music, find their way to the ears of the sorrowful, of the wounded sin-stained souls, of those who cast themselves in the dust, and weep bitterly, like St. Peter, over their faults. Is there not comfort in these words? Does not your heart catch them and drink them in? Does not your spirit revive and look up with hope? It is to such as you that our Saviour speaks; “ Come unto Me,” He says. Will you not come? Will you not exclaim, like the prodigal, “ I will arise and go to my Father, and say, Father, I have sinned ?” May you not hope that your Father will see you even when you are a great way off, and will go out to meet you, and will fall on your neck and kiss you, and will say, “ This My son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found ?”

Only look to your Saviour while He tarried in the world. Did He not call the sinners to Himself? He did eat with publicans and sinners; He pardoned the adulteress, and bade her sin no more; He received sinners; He declared that He came to seek and save that which was lost; *to call not the righteous, but sinners to repent-*

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ance. He told us, for the comfort of the repentant, that there is joy among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. Behold Him also not only in His life, but in His death; behold Him upon His Cross, with His pale limbs, His drooping head, His bleeding hands and feet. Behold, I say, the Cross, and hope! Your sins were taken up upon that tree. In those sufferings your suffering was contained, and the wrath due to your sins was there endured; it was for your iniquities He was bruised, spit upon, crucified, pierced with the spear. Only hear how the prophet, foreseeing the virtue of that Cross, exclaimed of old, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." Pardon, abundant pardon, is the promise to all that repent and forsake their sins; pardon, abundant pardon is yet within your reach. Humble yourself, and you will be lifted up; abase yourself, and you will be raised. Those who are now "in Christ's stead," "sent" by Him, gifted with ministerial power by Him, come to you in His Name and pray you to "be reconciled to God; theirs is the ministry of reconciliation;" they are sent

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forth to seek for the lost sheep, and to bring them into the fold again, and to feed them again within the borders of the Church. It is still said that "the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise:" it is still said, "I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

O hear these glorious words; throw yourself at the foot of the Cross; cast yourself down before your most merciful God; pray in hope, pray in faith; offer the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, which will not be despised. Your Father longs to pardon you; His love is not exhausted and spent; He desires to embrace you with the arms of His mercy, for your Saviour pleads for you, intercedes for you, beseeches the Father on your behalf. By His Cross and Passion He pleads, and by that Cross and Passion He prevails. Take comfort, then, O thou penitent soul; draw near and live; there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, shall there not be joy for you?

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

EVIL ANGELS.

EVEN while we are here on earth we are in the midst of an unseen world. We feel indeed that there are unseen things of the natural world, full of power and strength. The wind, for instance, blows upon us, and yet we see it not; it touches us, it comes against us, it creeps into us, it pierces us, it chills us; and yet all the while our eyes cannot discern what it is, nor catch any shape or form; we hold up our hand, and some invisible thing presses against it; sometimes it is sweet balmy air that refreshes and revives, sometimes it is a rough keen cutting blast; but whether it is soft or sharp, it is an unseen power. So again, of our speech one with the other; we shape the words with our lips, and our lips move, but the sound, the breath, who can see? Words act with strongest power, for good or evil; yea, what great things words do; and the tongue conveys invisible *poison or invisible* goodness into our ears.

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And now turn to the spiritual world, which the natural world illustrates in many points. We do not *see* all that is near us, all that is close to us, nor all that acts upon us. Our eyes are holden. We only see sun, moon, stars, men, houses, fields, towns, rivers, and such like things; and yet moving through these earthly scenes, moving through them continually, there is a great company of unseen creatures, creatures without outward form or shape, as invisible as the wind, which the keenest eye cannot catch, though they may be all around us, and very near us, and able to influence, to direct, to colour our very thoughts.

Now I will speak at present of but one portion of the spiritual world; of those fallen ones, those lost spirits, the devil and his angels. Night and day they roam about the world; they pass throughout it; they are present in every part; they are in crowded cities, in solitary fields; they are continually with men, following them, tracking, pursuing, haunting them, wherever men are to be found. No man moves without some of these spirits moving near him. Man is their prey, the object of their malicious pursuit. Fly to the mountains, go into the wilderness, and even as the prince of darkness, the chief

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of the devils, followed our Blessed Saviour into His solitude, so will evil angels follow the lonely to the most lonely place; take ship across the sea, and lo they are with the voyager in his ship; mix among the multitudes of populous towns, there also they follow each man in all those multitudes, leaving none alone, with many arts and wiles seeking to slay every soul; so that wherever there is a man, there also is the enemy of man, there is an unseen foe, there is man's pursuer, his deceiver, his great destroyer. Not one man of all the millions that are alive walks through the world without being beset, enticed, attacked, tempted by the fallen spirit and his host. Of the world itself, it may be said that "it is grievously vexed with the devil." It is not simply that here and there, through some parts and places, at some times, or with some men, these evil angels are at work. No, every man is a mark, each son of Adam, none are left untempted or unattacked. So has it been from the fall; not only did all sons of Adam derive from their fallen father a tainted nature and tainted blood, but all and each in their fallen state, became the objects of continued attack on the part of the serpent; all and each *have been sought after by devils from that time*

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to this, have been diligently, craftily, ceaselessly pursued. This fallen world has been the daily, hourly stage of his most fearful wiles. The world is open to him; he is in the world; he roams throughout it; his followers are in every place; the footsteps of every single man are traced; and all that devilish hate, malice, subtilty, skill, strength, perseverance can do, is done, that every single man may be added to the company of hell.

And yet while I say these things, look out upon the face of the world, upon its calmer or busier scenes, and what can you *see*? Where can your eye catch an evil angel's form? Of all the millions, whose everlasting destruction the prince of darkness has sought or is seeking now, who has gazed upon him? In our Saviour's day, indeed, with all that wonderful consciousness some men had of the presence of devils, of being possessed by them, torn, thrown to the ground, we know not whether the outward form of any of these evil ones was seen. At other times, at any rate, we know that they have been veiled from the eyes of men; they have moved in secret; in secret they have laid their plans for man's perdition; in secret come near and hovered about them; in secret set this or that temptation in

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their way ; in secret urged them to do such a deed of darkness, or to give way to such an evil thought, or to give utterance to such evil words. Men may at times have felt that they were under some peculiar temptation, as though some great influence of Satan, some of his sharper arrows were driven against them, but what have they *seen* of the Wicked One ? All that their eyes have gazed upon has looked as usual ; no dark fearful forms, no shapes of devils have been beheld ; unseen have been the tempters, even when they were putting forth their utmost malice and utmost strength, even when, as it were, they were closing with the victims of their fiercest assaults.

Do not disbelieve this presence of the Wicked One because he crosses not your fleshly eye and cannot be discerned. Rather disbelieve the wind, that lifts up the mighty waves of the sea and dashes them against each other ; rather disbelieve the wind that tears up by the root the strong trees of the forest and casts them to the earth. There is this wicked one, this evil person, this evil being, this prince of hell, this murderer of souls, in the midst of the world with his ghostly forces under him. He is not *indeed a mere evil wind or breath or influence.*

pervading all the world and diffused throughout, but he is a person ; he exists even as we exist, he has a personal life, a personal existence, though without outward body or outward form.

And is there not something fearful in reading what Holy Scripture says of his attacks on men, of the manner of his life, of his ceaseless, his persevering, his subtle designs, his labours, his strife, his watchings, his toils that he may get souls into his net and sweep them into hell? Is there not something fearful in being told that we ourselves are daily subject to his wiles, that we ourselves are objects of his attack, that we ourselves are surrounded by his arts, are tried in various ways, are invisibly besieged, are warred against, are fired at in the dark, are known to him, are watched, are the marks of his arrows, are followed by him night and day? Wherever we move or go, whatever we do, whether we are at home or are in our work, are talking or acting, are with others or alone, are in towns or country places, are resting or journeying, we are followed by the evil ones. Our whole life from our birth to the hour of death is one scene of temptation. When we are most unconscious of these wiles of Satan, when we are most secure, when we are thinking least of his

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hatred, his arts of ruin, then we are especially under his power; then he has rocked us, as it were, to sleep, that he may destroy us without our seeing or feeling what he is about. His foot often falls softly, and he is very near when men forget that he even exists. The careless and the thoughtless are in the utmost danger when they see nothing to alarm them, and have no anxiety about their souls.

If indeed Scripture is true, and we receive its truth, how can we be without anxiety? How different the whole world seems to be when Scripture on this point is well considered and embraced! all is changed. We learn thence to walk circumspectly; we feel the need of hourly watchfulness; we prepare ourselves for a battle every hour; we expect an attack at every turn. We do not move lightly forward into life with unguarded souls, but we make a careful march, looking before us, behind us, on either side, putting on the whole armour of God and persevering in prayer and earnest supplication. Only suppose that some man, breathing deadly hate, were ever pursuing us, dogging our heels, haunting us, seeking us out to slay us, should we not go carefully, watchfully into *every place*? And yet every day, yea, every hour

there is one who approaches us, who has power to suggest evil to our thoughts, who can act upon our inmost souls, who can pour forth his venom into the chambers of our hearts. Though the world looks as usual, though we see no horrid shapes flitting through the air, though no frightful forms are at our heels, though we see only the hills and fields and towns and rivers and fellow-men, yet we see only part of the world; mixed up with us is a vast and fearful spiritual world; close to us are companies of evil angels, an unseen world of evil spirits, threading their way into every place, ever present where men are to be found, ever hunting after men, ever moving among them to devour them. If with the eye of faith we discern this world, there can be no carelessness, no unconcern. We must then feel the awfulness of human life, the greatness of the trial in which we are all engaged, and the need of flying to every means of keeping ourselves from Satan's power, of contending with him, and of conquering. We cannot take an easy view of life when we take this Scripture view of it. O it is an awful thing to live here on earth in the very midst of ghostly enemies, of unseen foes! *the fireside at which we sit, the streets and*

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roads through which we walk, the field or shop in which we toil, nay, the very Church in which we pray; every scene becomes a scene of trial; we discern every where and in every thing tempters and temptations. And it only heightens our just anxiety, when we consider the wisdom, the subtilty, the power and strength of the enemies who are seeking our life. These "principalities and powers," these "powers of the air," these "powers of darkness," are not weak or feeble or of slender skill. They are very Goliaths in strength, serpents in wisdom. And we, what are we? Even the fact that they are unseen adds to our danger; we know not on which side they come; we know not at what time, nor in what things they will tempt us most; what seems a place of safety may be a place of danger, and where all looks smooth, there may be set the most cunning snares.

And yet while this great truth concerning the existence and the power of the evil angels may well make us start upon our feet and walk with godly fear, the fear of these evil ones need not quite weigh us down. Nay, it should rather urge us to fly the more heartily, the more earnestly to God our Saviour. Weak though we *be ourselves*, unequal to contend with foes like

them, still there is power in every one that has been baptized into Christ's body; for then we have been born again of water and of the Spirit, and have the Spirit of God, unless we have been sinning away our gift. "Greater," the Christian may exclaim, "is He that is in us than he that is in the world." If we be "temples of the Holy Ghost," we have Him dwelling in us, who will strengthen our walls of flesh and fill us with spiritual power, and cause the darts of the Wicked One to glance off as from polished stone. While we should still walk anxiously, we may walk with hope; we need not be overwhelmed with fear; for by the power of Christ, the Conqueror of the Wicked One, the Victor of death and hell, the Captain of our salvation, we shall prevail.

Or even if in times past we have not used our grace, but have become somewhat separated from Christ, and have wandered into sinful ways from our Father's home, there is a hand held out to us and beckoning us to return; there is a voice calling out to us to seek again the shelter of His wings. Our Lord Jesus sends His holy angels after the lost sheep; He sends His earthly ministers; yea, God the Holy Ghost Himself goes after them that He may draw them out

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of Satan's net, that He may lead them to repentance, that He may even tear them out of Satan's hands, as brands from the burning.

Should you then have lived carelessly and now wake up and see that the devil has been getting you into his power, hasten towards the Cross; hasten to your Saviour; fly as from a serpent; fly for your very life; knock at the door of heaven with prayer; knock with frequent persevering prayer; cry aloud for help even if at first there comes no sound, no answer, or if, like Joseph to his brethren, or like Himself with the Canaanitish woman, our Lord at first speaks roughly. Prayer will prevail at last. Pray on and verily you will be heard.

Or should any of your friends or kindred be under Satan's rule, leading a godless and unchristian life, pray, pray for them; befriend them upon your knees, intercede for them in your Saviour's Name. Seek Christ in very fervent prayer; though at first He answers not a word and you see no change in those you love, yet still, still pray on; still cry out in very earnest tones, "Lord have mercy on me, Thou Son of David." Surely you may hope that at last the devil may be cast out, and that at last the Lord *may say*, "*Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*"

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Only persevere; only continue instant in prayer; the devil will not easily give up possession of a single soul; he will not easily let go his hold; he clings as long as he can to every soul whom he has once mastered; hence we need very earnest and very persevering prayer to move God to shew forth His power, and to cast out the strong man armed, to save a soul from death.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

HOW TO KEEP EASTER.

How shall we keep Easter? Why, keep it as Christian men, as men risen with Christ, as men whose affections are set on things above, as men "buried with Christ by Baptism unto death," and by Him quickened to newness of life, called to holiness of life, called from the sins, the pleasures, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world to serve the living God, that we may have a joyful resurrection at the last great day.

In some Christian countries when friends meet at Easter time, they say to each other, "Christ is risen." This is their Easter salutation: and how beautiful it is! how well it shews the one great thought, the one most blessed truth that should at that time especially take possession of our souls, that should be first and uppermost in our minds. If we did but say to ourselves, "Christ is risen," and think of His triumphant victory over death and hell, of all the bright and glorious hopes which we have of escaping through Christ the lake of fire, the terrors of everlasting

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death, we should enter Easter in a right spirit and make it a season profitable to our souls. It is indeed a time for religious joy, for religious gladness of heart, for religious thankfulness. Only consider how the truth of our Saviour's resurrection brightens all our earthly life. Only consider how dark, how desolate, how full of despair and gloom even our earthly life would have been, if this our Blessed Lord had not died for our sins, and had not risen for our justification. What would have been our prospect? what should we have had to look forward to? There would have been nothing before us but *the certainty of hell*. Hell alone would have been before us, whatsoever we might be, however we might live. Every day, every hour of our life we should have felt ourselves drawing so many paces nearer hell, no escape, no hope of escape, no place of refuge, no other doom. The best of us and the worst of us would have had but one prospect. We should have been sure that after a few months and years, after this hurrying span of life, after a short pilgrimage in the world, we should be cast into outer darkness, should be suffering the torments of the lost, should be made to dwell with the devils everlastingly, should hear the gates of hell close

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against us for ever. Our wives, our husbands, our children, our brethren, our friends, all, with ourselves, must have had this doom, if Christ Jesus our Saviour had not suffered upon the Cross, and had not risen again from the dead. "If Christ be not risen . . . ye are yet in your sins."

Thus even our hours of joy would have been blighted, overshadowed, darkened by the continual recollection of the tremendous doom so soon about to be endured. The bride in her closet, the mother with her new-born child, must have said of themselves and of their beloved ones in the very hour of their greatest joy, "soon must we be all in hell!" Thus the cup of joy must have been continually dashed out of our hands.

Or if we had been in any distress, where then could we have found light in a dark place? Hope, we know, enables men to go through present pains. But where should we have found hope? Our sorrows would have multiplied and increased beyond measure, by the fearful prospect of being so soon launched into the greater sorrows of everlasting death. If, for instance, we had a sickness unto death, *some disease that was past all cure, we should*

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not have been able to have cheered ourselves in hours of suffering and bodily distress, by the hope of being freed from suffering before long, and of finding rest for our soul in Paradise, when it had left the painful tabernacle of flesh. Or if we had to gaze upon the dying form of wife, of husband, of mother, of child, what bitter, bitter thoughts must have crushed our souls, when we foresaw their speedy departure to endless pangs.

And when at last death came to them, with what anguish, with what agony must we have gazed on the face of the dead, thinking of the torment that had already seized upon the soul of him we loved.

But now, my friend, my brother in Christ Jesus, now that Christ is risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept, all is changed, all is brightened, all is full of hope and light to them that have been baptized into Christ, and walk faithfully under His Cross. That black prospect, that certainty of everlasting destruction from the presence of God is past. We have hope, we have the offer, we have the promise of being saved from hell, of being received up into heaven, of passing into the very joys of the kingdom of God; yea,

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we have already in the very gifts of the Spirit, in our union with Christ, in our membership in Christ's Church, a sort of assurance and foretaste of heaven ; already the light shines upon us ; already the blessing of God is with us ; already we are made God's children by adoption and grace ; already by Baptism we cease to be children of wrath ; already we are translated from darkness, from hopelessness, from a state of death and corruption into the kingdom of Christ, and have become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

All then, I say, is changed ; now all innocent joy is heightened ; the bride in her closet may now say, "He whom I love I hope to dwell with not in this life only, but for ever in the presence of God. Though death will part us for a time, if we serve God in our earthly life we shall be joined together in that better, more blissful world where there is no parting, no sorrow, no death." The mother may now clasp her new-born child to her breast ; and while she rejoices in the gift of a child to cheer her upon earth, she may say, " Now I have hope through Christ's death and through Christ's resurrection, of dwelling eternally in peace and bliss with my little one. I know that death *must divide us* before long ; but I trust that we

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shall live together hereafter in heaven ; I trust that we shall be saved ; I know now that we can be saved ; I know that our Saviour has paid the ransom for our sins and has conquered death and hell by His resurrection from the dead. Henceforth my joy in my child is not checked or chilled by the fearful, dreadful, intolerable thought that we cannot be saved, that we must perish together and be lost together."

And then consider the time of trouble, the season of great distress. If we had a sickness unto death, a sickness past cure, could we not then lift up our hearts and console ourselves in the midst of our grievous pains by the blessed prospect of joy, of peace, of rest hereafter with Christ, of a resurrection to everlasting glory, remembering those most comforting words of the Apostle, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

Or if we had to look on the death of some dear friend, some beloved child ; if we had to go heavily as one that mourneth for his mother, and had lost one who was as dear to us as ourselves, then indeed we might learn to sorrow not without hope, our grief would be heightened by such blessed hope. We should be able to say, "This

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my friend who served Christ on earth, who by God's grace laboured earnestly to walk by faith and to do God's will, will at the last day rise from his grave, and by the power of Christ's resurrection will be raised up to the city of God, to that home prepared for God's true children in heaven, 'where there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.' "

Now these, I say, are Easter thoughts. If our Saviour's glorious resurrection has worked such a change, has given such glorious hopes, do we not see at once how we ought to keep that holy season in which His resurrection is remembered in the Church? What has Easter got to do with worldly pleasures, worldly gaieties, worldly racket and dissipation? How utterly ill-placed, misplaced, out of place, is worldly mirth and worldly rejoicings at such a time. What! are we to fool away our time, to revel and riot, to eat, drink, and be merry, to be pleasure-seekers, to give rein to the spirit of earthly joy, because Christ has risen, because we have hope of escaping hell fire, because, if we walk after the Spirit, we can be raised up into heaven? How monstrous, how unholy, how perilous a thing it were to make the *solemn, blessed, mysterious truth of the resur-*

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HOW TO KEEP EASTER.

rection of our Lord and Saviour, a reason for breaking out into frivolous pleasures, idle merry-makings, noisy festivities.

Surely, my friend, this is not the way to keep Easter ; I speak to you as one saved from the certainty of hell. O keep Easter like a Christian, keep it as a very holy time ; keep it with reverend and holy joy ; keep it as one thankful for the mercies of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Pray more ; increase your prayers ; go up to the house of God, if possible, every day that it is opened during this season. Partake of that spiritual feast, that blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood in which we become one with Christ and Christ one with us. Shew love to all the poor members of Christ ; help those who are in need ; let your thankfulness break out in acts of pity and compassion. Also, think comfortably of those whom you have lost, of the beloved ones who have fallen asleep in Christ, and are parted from you for a time ; think of their present rest and peace, the foretaste and beginning of fuller joy ; think of that most blissful day when you may again look upon mother, child, or wife, and pass with them with joy unspeakable into heaven.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

*MEDITATION ON THE DAY OF
JUDGMENT.*

O FATHER without beginning,
O only-begotten Son,
O quickening Spirit,

Merciful, compassionate, long-suffering, of great
pity, of great loving-kindness, who lovest the
righteous, and hast compassion on the wicked,

Pardoning our offences, and granting our pe-
titions ;

O God of the repentant,
O Saviour of sinners,

I have sinned against Thee, O Lord, and thus
and thus have I done. *Josh. vii. 20.*

Alas ! Alas !

How have I been enticed by my own lust.

James i. 14.

How have I hated instruction ! *Prov. v. 12.*

I have neither revered nor dreaded

Thy incomprehensible splendour,

Thy awful presence,

Thy terrible power,

Thy unerring justice,

Thy enduring kindness.

I will call therefore if there be any that will
answer me : *Job v. 1.*

MEDITATION ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me
from the body of this death ? *Rom. vii. 24.*

How terrible is Thy judgment, O Lord,
When the thrones are prepared,
When the Angels stand by
When mankind are introduced,
When the books are opened,
When deeds are scrutinized,
When thoughts are revealed,
When hidden things of darkness are brought
to light. *1 Cor. iv. 5.*

What will be my sentence,
Who will extinguish my flame,
Who will lighten my darkness,
Unless Thou have pity on me ?

Grant me tears, O Lord, as Thou lovest me !
Grant me many tears, and grant them now !

For at that day there will be
An inflexible judge,
A dreadful tribunal,
Pleadings without excuse,
Accusations without denial,
A bitter recompense,
Torments interminable,
Fiends inflexible,
The yawning gulf of hell,
The roaring stream of fire,
Of fire never to be extinguished ;

MEDITATION ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

A dungeon of darkness,
Of darkness where no light can pene-
trate;
Beds of burning ashes,
A worm that never dieth,
Chains that never part asunder,
Chaos without boundary,
A wall we cannot surmount,
Lamentations unpitied;
None to help,
None to defend,
None to liberate.

But I repent, O Lord, O Lord, I do repent;
help Thou mine impenitence; and more and
more continually, pierce, cleave, and bruise my
heart.

Behold, Lord, what indignation I have wrought
against myself. *2 Cor. vii. 11.*

By reason of the yearning of my flesh,
So ignorant, *Luke xxiii. 34.*
So foolish, *Psalms lxxiii. 22.*
So hurtful, *1 Tim. vi. 9.*
And so dangerous. *Isaiah xxvi. 11.*

Behold how I abhor myself. *Job xlii. 6.*

Behold how continually my confusion is be-
fore me, and the shame of my face hath covered
me. *Psalms xlii. 15.*

Behold, Lord, how I denounce myself wor

MEDITATION ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

thy of eternal punishment, yea, and of all the miseries of this world.

Behold me, Lord, condemned by my own judgment : *Tit.* iii. 11.

Behold, O Lord, and enter not into judgment with Thy servant. *Psalms* cxliii. 2.

And now, Lord, I am humbled under Thy mighty hand ; *1 Pet.* v. 6.

Unto Thee, O Lord, I bow my knees.

Eph. iii. 14.

I fall on my face to the earth. *Josh.* v. 14.

I stretch forth my hands unto Thee.

Psalms cxliii. 6.

I smite upon my breast : *Luke* xviii. 13.

O Lord, hear my voice, for Thine own sake, and for Thy Christ's sake. *John* xiv. 13.

Be merciful, O Lord, to me, the chief of sinners. *1 Tim.* i. 15.

O my God, let mercy rejoice against judgment over my transgressions. *James* ii. 13.

O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken ; O Lord, hearken, and do ; defer not, for Thine own sake ; defer not, O Lord my God. *Dan.* ix. 19.

A WORD TO THE AGED.

LONG, my friend, has God kept you upon earth; He has prolonged your time; He has not cut you off in the midst of your life, nor shortened your days; He has given you the full length of man's life. Many a neighbour have you seen cut down before you; many in their prime, many in their youth, many even in their infancy; and yet sickness, accidents, fevers, the pestilence that walketh in darkness, have passed you over, have left you standing in the land of the living, have not hurried you into God's presence.

Has not God in thus sparing your life been very merciful to your soul? Have there not been times when it would have gone hard with you if you had died? Have there not been times when you were unfit for death, unfit for judgment, unfit for seeing face to face the Lord Jesus Christ our Judge and Saviour. Bless God therefore, bless Him and praise Him with

A WORD TO THE AGED.

all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, that He has given you time for repentance and amendment of life, for bringing forth fruits of repentance, for making your peace with Him through the blood of Jesus Christ His Son, for walking more closely after His will, for making growth in a holy and spiritual life, in short, for preparing yourself more earnestly for your latter end.

And have you not many signs and proofs that God is now wishing you to give your whole heart to the work of your salvation? Look, my friend, at your own self. Your limbs tremble, your bodily strength is gone, your hands are weak, you are past work; and yet, while unfit for the labours of the world, for your accustomed toils, you are still alive. Why, I ask you, are you kept lingering here? why are you still living in the world when you seem almost like lumber in the world? Nay, you are not lumber; you have work to do, though the plough, the spade, the tools and instruments of earthly toil are taken from your hands. You would not be alive if you were past all work. You have work to do for Christ, for your soul, for the life to come. The hidden man of the heart has toils and labours and watchings and

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many services to perform for that Master who will soon come and take account of His servants. If you have one set of labours to lay down, you have another set of labours to take up. Take up your Bible more than ever; take up your Prayer-book; go oftener to Church; look upon what seems the waste and spare time of your life as a very busy, important, precious time for the solemn preparation of your soul for death. It is a happy thing for you that you are forced to lay aside worldly business, for then you can give more heed to heavenly things; *you have nothing else to do*; you have nothing to hinder or interrupt you; the whole day is yours; you have plenty of time upon your hands for reading God's Word, for going up to God's House on week-days, if it is open, as well as on Sundays, for much private prayer in your own room, for frequent communings with your own heart, and careful meditation on the truths revealed by God.

When a man is past his worldly work, all his days are Sabbaths; every day becomes a day of prayer, of religious service; every day is to be set apart and consecrated to God. An old man, even though he may walk a few paces down the *street or along the lane*, should look upon himself

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as a *dying man*. The very fact that he cannot labour for his earthly master tells him that he is drawing near death, and that his soul should be anxiously turned towards that heavenly Master before whose throne he will have to stand, when at the latter day the Redeemer cometh. You have nothing to do, you are able to do nothing now, but set your house in order and prepare to meet your God. It is for this that your life has been preserved ; God is not willing that you should perish ; your Saviour has suffered anguish unspeakable for your redemption ; and He is now giving you in His mercy this blessed time, in which, though no longer useful in a worldly way, you can further His own work in you, walk more worthily as one whom He has redeemed, and putting aside all worldly care, cast all your care upon Him.

It was in this spirit that the aged Simeon spent his latter days ; he walked with God ; he devoted the feeble remnant of his life to God's service ; he loved the Temple of the Lord ; and while the busy crowd of men were buying, selling, making gain, taking pleasure, he was upon his knees waiting day by day in the holy place for the salvation of God. To that aged servant, to him who in his old age gave himself

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up to God, the Lord revealed Himself. To that old man, that aged worshipper, that grey-headed servant of the Lord, the Lord was made known. So also was it with the aged Anna; she was of a great age; her strength was past; she was no more able to toil and bustle in the world, she withdrew from such things to the House of Prayer; she spent her days with God in prayer; "she departed not from the Temple," we read, "but served God with fastings and prayers night and day," and she also had her great reward. Shall it not also be so with you? Will not you thus try to have a good sunset to your life? Will you not spend your time in repentance, in prayer, in diligent use of all means of grace? Will you not seek the Lord in His Temple? Will you not by daily communion with God on earth prepare yourself for His presence? It is a blessed thing to be prepared for meeting God, a blessed thing to have time given you for preparing, a blessed thing to die when we have made our peace with God, and have a good hope of a joyful resurrection through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord. O use your time, my friend, for your time is short; the hour of your departure is at hand; your *failing limbs* are as sermons and preachers tell-

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ing you with all plainness that your earthly house is about to be dissolved. You will not long be here. In a little time the limbs will be weaker still, your strength still less, and the hour of departure will have come. Do not trust to a single day. You know how often aged men have suddenly dropped down and died, without time for so much as a single prayer, without time to lift up one cry for mercy. May it not be so with you? May you not suddenly find yourself in God's presence? Some ordinary morning you may get up and feel as well as usual and think that you will lie down at night; when the night comes, you may be dead! Even the life of the young is uncertain and frail, but what must yours be, whose body is worn out and the fleshly frame sinking into feebleness?

Spend, then, every day as if it were your last; take every step with care; increase your watchfulness; practise patience and resignation to God's will; do not murmur at your weakness; wean yourself from the world and set your affections more and more on things above. The more the outward man perishes, so much the more seek the renewal and strengthening of the *inward* man. Though your body weakens, your

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soul may be getting strong; you may be growing purer in heart, stronger in faith, more fervent in prayer, more unworldly in your desires, more anxious for pardon, more conscious of your sins, more grieved at the sins you have indulged, a more frequent partaker of the blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood, more truly prepared to receive it, more humble in your own eyes, and more keenly alive to the unspeakable love of God in Christ Jesus.

O my friend, if you are but prepared, how great a gain it will be to die, how blessed a change! You will lay down this vile, weak, feeble body, full of labour and sorrow; you will lay down your aching limbs, your worn-out tabernacle of flesh; and your soul, freed from this frail, drooping, decaying body, will spring upward like the lark and pass into paradise. In paradise, amid the spirits of just men, amid the blissful souls of the saints, your soul will abide until the day of Christ's second coming; and then when His voice calls the dead out of their graves, you will only have fresh joys, fresh pleasures, and a great increase to your felicity; for then your vile body, quickened by Christ, will be changed and fashioned by His power *into a glorious body like unto His own, a body*

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that will never know pain or weakness, hunger or thirst, a body that will never suffer and never die.

Think of the blessedness of such a change; think how great a change it will be to pass from your present home into paradise. Prepare then to meet thy God; prepare to die; watch and pray; pray without ceasing; walk with God, and thus you will be enabled in the hour of your death to commend your soul in hope into your Saviour's hands, and to say, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." May God the Holy Ghost be with you, to help you and succour you for Christ's sake!

THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER.

! WOE be to him who shall shed man's blood ; by man shall his blood be shed ; by God shall both body and soul be cast into hell ; no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him ; nay, he is dead while he lives, dead indeed, even though he should escape discovery among men ; the earth will disclose at last the blood that he has shed ; murder will out, if not in this world, yet before the judgment-seat of Christ. He may pray the mountains to fall on him and the hills to cover him, but he will have to rise with his stained hands and his stained soul before the presence of Almighty God, the great God and the terrible, who will take vengeance on the murderer, who will repay him for his deed, who will require his brother's blood at his hand.

Resist then all angry and cruel thoughts that may at last lead to blood ; resist all feelings of revenge and hate, resist all greediness of gain, all *guilty thirst* for the possessions of other men ;

THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER.

resist all thoughts of murder however faint or slight, cast them from you as you would a serpent from your hand, suffer them not to live even a moment in your heart. Above all, do not say, "why do you speak to me of murdering; what have I to do with any thing so horrible?" Only search the histories of murderers. There was a time in the life of every one of them, when they would have shuddered like you or me at any tale of cruelty or of murder; when they would have started at the sight of blood. If you indulge revenge, covetousness, drunkenness, you cannot tell where these sins will end. Down and down do men sink from bad to worse; from lesser sins to greater; and they often do that at last which at one time they would have trembled even to think of.

Take, for instance, the case of Cain, the first murderer. He did not at once wish to slay his brother. He began by offering God a less acceptable sacrifice; he then went on to envy Abel because he offered better things, and then from envy he was led on to slay his brother. So was it also with the traitor Judas. First he began to covet, then his covetousness tempted him to steal, then the covetousness becoming greater still, he was led to betray the innocent

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blood, and for thirty pieces of silver to sell his Lord. Pass on from these great cases to those that happen in our day. First a man falls into bad company, he begins to drink, he is tempted into the beer-shop, he repeats his visits, he gets more fond of wild ways and wild companions, then comes stealing, then comes murder. No man *begins* with murder ; it is the end of his iniquity ; and when he first sets out on evil ways he little suspects where the devil will make him end. Take the cases of the more notorious murderers of the day and see how they began ; the same tale is told in all, they began with some lesser sin ; in one there was the indulgence of fleshly lusts, in the other there was indolence and want of industry that led him to thieve or poach ; in another, anger, passionateness and the spirit of revenge were allowed to have their way ; in another there was greediness of gain, a thirst for money ; in another jealousy, envy. These are the roads to murder, the beginnings of murderous thoughts, the first steps of the ladder, and men yielding to these sins have been drawn on and on, till at last they have put their hands to some bloody deed from which once they would have recoiled with horror.

This it is that makes me say, do not think it

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an impossible thing to murder; do not say to yourself that it is impossible your hand should do such a deed. Every murderer has so said and so felt at some time of his life. You see two boys quarrelling together; in a few years one is a murderer; who would have suspected such an issue of the youthful broil? Would not the youth himself have turned pale at the mere mention of any tale of blood? This it is that makes me say, avoid all sin, and abhor all that is evil; resist covetousness, resist wildness and youthful lusts, resist anger and revengeful feelings; resist covetousness. You cannot tell where these sins will lead you to, if you let them grow and gather strength. One single hour, one single act, may put a fearful finish to a lustful, revengeful, passionate or covetous temper.

But supposing we never should be led to do murder, supposing we remain guiltless of that most fearful form of sin, are we in such a case free from any violation of that command of God? I think not. The command takes the worst case first, that is, the case of actual murder, but it also includes all other sins which may be ranged as being akin to that. Many men have broken this commandment who never shed blood. Thus every fit of anger, every out-break of ill

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temper, every act of passion is a breach of this holy law. Have you never been angry and passionate? Have you never indulged in hatred and ill-will? Have you never broken out into unchristian heat and maliciousness? Have you never borne a grudge and allowed yourself to nourish dislike and enmity? Have you never quarrelled? Alas, who can say that his conscience is free from such things? And yet if these things have been done, we have broken that commandment which says, Thou shalt do no murder. We may have fancied as we heard it read in Church that that commandment in no way concerned ourselves, or that whatever we might be tempted to do hereafter we had not already broken it. Though our hands have never been stained with blood, we may have gone against this holy law of God. Check yourself therefore for the future when anger rises up, when you feel yourself beginning to be passionate; resist all strong feelings of ill-will; and if you have been tempted to give way to some out-break of temper, let not the sun go down upon your wrath; seek pardon of God for your offence before you lie down to rest, and go and be reconciled to your neighbour.

Again, every act of violence and of cruelty is

THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER.

a breach of this holy law. When men quarrel and then strike each other, when they do each other bodily hurt, when they wound the body, or in any way maim or pain the body, they have gone against God's will. By them that law has been broken which says, Thou shalt do no murder. The body of a Christian is sacred, it is a temple of the Holy Ghost; therefore it is not to be hurt, it is not to be attacked or wounded, and this law of God is designed to protect it not only from murder and deadly wounds, but from all violence, all ill usage, all indignity.

And not only are we to abstain from all injury to the bodies of our fellow men, which, as habitations of the Spirit, as united with Christ, are worthy of especial honour; but we are also charged by this commandment to be merciful to all the creatures of God's hand, to be merciful to the beasts and cattle of the field, to be merciful to all animals placed under our care. God in entrusting the dumb beasts to our hands bids us to be merciful. He lays this law upon us, He holds us guilty of the violation of the commandment concerning murder whenever we are cruel to our horses, our dogs, our cattle. And yet how often, whether in youth or manhood, are *men* reckless of the pain they inflict on animals.

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Nay, it is said that no nation in the world, not even the heathen, are so cruel to the horse as we in England.

Let me remind you also that not only by your deeds and by your hands can you so hurt your neighbour as to break this commandment, but by your words. Words are often as "very swords;" men have been often ruined, beggared, slain by words. You may murder men by words; yes, destroy their characters, blacken them before men, deprive them through evil words of their honest name, bring them into disrepute, and stab their reputation on which their livelihood depends. Or by continual unkindness, by hastiness, by hard speeches, you may so grieve the spirits of those with whom you live that their life may be embittered, their hearts pierced through and made to bleed within, their whole existence here saddened and clouded over. The words of a sullen, morose spirit are sharper than swords, and many have pined away because of the severe words that have daily gone to their souls.

Think then of the many ways and forms in which we may break this law; see how much there is contained in the commandment than at *sight appears*; consider well how often you

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yourself have in some way disobeyed our heavenly Father's will. Confess all such sins as your conscience may accuse you of. Watch yourself more carefully in time to come, remembering that we are called to live under the law of love, that we should be gentle and kind and merciful and full of peace, even as our Saviour was meek and lowly in heart, giving His back to the smiters, suffering Himself to be wounded for our transgressions, healing the wounds and sicknesses of others, and ever seeking to save and not to destroy.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

DEVOTIONS FOR PENITENTS.

FATHER, I have sinned against Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy Son.

God be merciful to me a sinner.

O MOST mighty God! Thou art a consuming fire to all rebellious and impenitent sinners; a dreadful avenger of such as are obstinately wicked, but a most compassionate Father to all those that truly repent and turn unto Thee; O now shall I dare to speak unto Thee who am all over sin and pollution, a creature vile and loathsome in my own eyes by reason of my sin, but much more so in Thine, who art a God of infinite purity and holiness, and hatest iniquity with a perfect hatred! O Lord, when I look back upon my past life, I am astonished at Thy patience and long-suffering towards me; and must acknowledge that hadst Thou dealt with me as I have deserved, I had long before this been con-

demned to everlasting wrath. For ever adore be that goodness which has dealt so graciously with me; for ever praised be that mercy which has snatched me out of the jaws of the devouring lion, and saved me from the pit of destruction which I was running headlong into; for ever magnified be that grace which has at last touched my heart with a sense of my sins, and given me this opportunity of humbling myself before Thee. O Lord, I do now most sorrowfully bewail and lament before Thee the sins and iniquities of my past life, which are so exceeding many and great, that as I am confounded at the guilt of them, so I know not where to begin when I would confess them before Thee. Ever from my youth up, have I been a rebellious and disobedient sinner, a contemner of Thy laws, and one of those wretched fools that have made a mock at sin and would not hearken to wise counsel and reproof; I have grieved and despised the Spirit of grace, and followed the dictates of my own foolish and perverse will; my mind has been overspread with blindness and ignorance, folly and false reasonings, and almost every power and faculty of my soul is corrupted and defaced; that time, which should have been employed to holy and excellent purposes, I have

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either consumed upon my lusts, or trifled away in vain and unprofitable pursuits. O my God ! I have sinned against Thee with a high hand, and have led a life directly contrary to Thy blessed will. More particularly, O Lord, I do most sorrowfully confess and lament before Thee, to whom all things are naked and open, that I have most grievously offended Thee by

[*Here name particular sins.*]

And what shall I now say unto Thee, O God, whose goodness I have thus abused, whose mercies I have slighted, whose judgments I have despised ? What hope can I entertain of the merits of a Saviour whose blood I have, as it were, trampled under foot ! or what comfort can I expect from the kind influences of the ever-blessed Spirit, whose motions I have so often rejected, whose calls and invitations I have so long been deaf to, and whom I have so often grieved by my wicked and sinful ways !

O blessed Saviour of the world ! Thou alone art my refuge ; in Thee is all my hope, all my support ; and if Thou rejectest me I am lost and undone for ever : Oh ! turn not away Thy face from me, nor cast Thy servant away in displeasure ; be Thou mine Advocate with the Father, and let Thy blood be the propitiation for my sins.

And O most merciful Father, Thou infinite and compassionate lover of souls, who delightest not in the death of the wicked, nor despisest the tears of a returning sinner, for the sake of Thy dear Son, I most earnestly beseech Thee to hear the groans of me, a miserable sinner, who am ready to sink under the heavy weight and burden of sin. Give me, O Lord, such an unfeigned repentance of all my past sins, such hatred and abhorrence of my former evil ways, that I may never return unto them. Give me that humble and contrite spirit, whose groans Thou dost never refuse, that faith which overcometh the world, and which will enable me to conquer my own inveterate habits, and that love which will make me afraid to offend Thee, and which will inspire me with resolutions active and vigorous, honest and sincere ; such as by the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit, may carry me through all difficulties and be proof against all the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. O Lord, hear me and have mercy upon me, and save my soul for Thy truth and mercy's sake in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

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A Litany for Pardon of Sins.

O GOD the Father of mercies, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon Thy servant, and hear the prayers of me a miserable sinner.

O blessed Jesus, the Fountain of peace and pardon, our wisdom and our righteousness, our sanctification and redemption, have mercy upon Thy servant, refuse not to hear the prayers of me, a miserable, sorrowful, and returning sinner.

O holy and divinest Spirit of the Father, help my infirmities: for of myself I know not what to ask, nor how to pray; but do Thou assist and be present in the desires of me a miserable sinner.

Remember not, Lord, the follies of my childhood, nor the lusts of my youth, the wildness of my head nor the wanderings of my heart, the infinite sins of my tongue and the inexcusable errors of the days of vanity.

Lord, have mercy upon me a poor miserable sinner.

Remember not, O Lord, the growing iniquities of my elder age, the pride of my spirit, the abuse of my members, the greediness of my appetite,

the inconstancy of my purposes, the peevishness and violence of all my passions and affections.

Lord, have mercy, &c.

Remember not, O Lord, how I have been full of envy and malice, anger and revenge ; fierce and earnest in the pursuits and vanities of the world, and lazy and dull, slow and soon weary in the things of God and of religion.

Lord, have mercy, &c.

Remember not, O Lord, my uncharitable behaviour towards those with whom I have conversed, my jealousies and suspicions, my evil surmisings and evil reportings, the breach of my promises to men, and the breach of all my holy vows made to Thee my God.

Lord, have mercy, &c.

Remember not, O Lord, how often I have omitted the several parts and actions of my duty ; for my sins of omission are infinite, and I have not sought after the righteousness of God, but have rested in carelessness and forgetfulness, in a false peace, and a silent conscience.

Lord, have mercy, &c.

O most precious Lord, enter not into judgment with Thy servant, lest I be consumed in Thy wrath and just displeasure ; from which

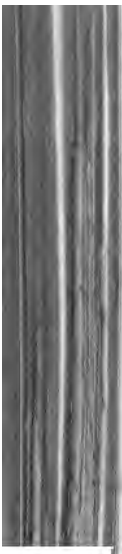
Good Lord, deliver me, and preserve Thy servant for ever.

DEVOTIONS FOR PENITENTS.

A Prayer for Repentance.

O THOU great Judge of all the world, Thou lovest not that a sinner should perish, but delightest in our conversion and salvation, and hast, in our Lord Jesus Christ, established the covenant of repentance, and promised pardon to all them that confess their sins and forsake them ; O my God, I remember that I did sin with greediness, and passion, and eager desires ; but now I heartily renounce all affection to sin, and would not buy my breath, nor redeem my life with acting against the laws of my Maker ; but would rather die than offend Him. Let my heart be as a river of waters and my head as a fountain of tears ; let every sigh be the expression of repentance, and every groan an accent of spiritual life, and every stroke of pain a punishment of my sin, and an instrument of pardon.

Support me with Thy graces, strengthen me with Thy Spirit, and having softened my heart with the fire of Thy love, and with the dew of Heaven, with penitential showers, bring me to the land of innocence and pleasure, where I shall sin no more, and grieve no more, through Jesus Christ, who is our hope, the resurrection of the



FORGIVE me my sins, O Lord, forgive
sins of my youth, and the sins of n
the sins of my soul and the sins of my b
secret and my whispering sins, my presu
and my crying sins, the sins that I ha
to please myself, and the sins that I ha
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now I have even hid them from my c
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and of Thy great goodness let me be :
from mine offences, through Jesus Ch

DEVOTIONS FOR PENITENTS.

led to error, and let me never run further into sin; but do Thou blot out all the evils I have done by the sponge of Thy Passion, and the blood of Thy Cross, and give me a deep and excellent repentance, a free and gracious pardon, that Thou mayest answer for me, O Lord: and enable me to stand upright in judgment, for in Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me never be confounded. Pity and instruct me, guide and support me, pardon and save me, for my Saviour Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

A Prayer for Holiness of Life.

O ETERNAL Father, Thou that sittest in Heaven, invested with essential glories and divine perfections, fill my soul with so deep a sense of the excellencies of spiritual and heavenly things, that my affections being weaned from the pleasures of the world and the false allurements of sin, I may with great severity, and the prudence of a holy discipline and strict desires, with clear resolutions and a free spirit, have my conversation in Heaven and heavenly employments, that being in affection, as in my condition, a pilgrim and a stranger here, I may covet after, and labour for an abiding city, and at last may



enter into, and for ever dwell in the celestial Jerusalem which is the mother of us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for Perseverance.

O ETERNAL and unchangeable Lord God, who art the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, be Thou pleased to communicate some small ray of that excellence, some degree of that stability to me Thy wretched creature, who am light and inconstant, turned about with every blast. My understanding is very deceivable, O establish it in Thy truth; keep it from the snares of seducing spirits, that I may not be led away with the error of the wicked, and fall from my own stedfastness; my will also, O Lord, is irresolute and wavering, and doth not cleave stedfastly unto God: my goodness is but as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it passeth away: O strengthen and confirm me, and whatever good work Thou hast wrought in me, be pleased to accomplish and perform it until the day of Christ. Lord, Thou seest my weakness, and Thou knowest the number and strength of those temptations I have to struggle with. O leave me not to myself, but cover Thou my head in the day of battle, and in

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all spiritual combats make me more than conqueror, through Him that loved me. O let no terrors or flatteries either of the world or my own flesh, ever draw me from my obedience to Thee, but grant that I may continue stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, and by patient continuing in well-doing, seek and at last obtain glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A brief form of commending one's-self to God.

INTO the hands of Thine ineffable mercy, O Lord, I commend my soul, my body, my sense, my speech, my thoughts, my works and deeds, all the necessities of my soul and body, my coming in, my going forth, my faith and conversation, my course and end of my life, the day and hour of my departure, my death, my rest, my resurrection with Thy saints and elect for ever. Lord, grant me an hatred of evils past, a contempt of sinful delights present, a desire of true delight for the time to come: grant me also, I beseech Thee, the removing of occasions of evil, the soundness of affection to refuse, and power *to resist my ghostly enemy, that he may never*

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say, I have prevailed against him. Omnipotent, and O merciful God, who didst add to the life of King Hezekiah fifteen years when he prayed unto Thee weeping, grant me, Thy unworthy servant, so much space before the day of my death, that I may bewail all my sins, and by Thy grace attain remission of them, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God the Father bless me :
God the Son defend me :
God the Holy Ghost preserve me :
Now and for ever. Amen.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

A TRACT FOR GOOD FRIDAY.

WE stand this day at the foot of the Cross. We have put away our worldly cares and worldly toils, that we may draw near and contemplate the Cross of Christ. It is a great mystery. We need on this day especially to use the prayer of the Apostles, "increase our faith." It is easy to say that Christ suffered, that Christ died for our sins; those words are soon out of our mouths; but it is not easy, nay, it is very hard to master, to know, to feel what we say. We must have the gift of faith for this; and we must pray that our faith may be so strengthened and increased, as to give us a clearer, deeper knowledge of the mystery of the Passion of our Lord.

First of all, consider *who* it is of whom we speak, when we say, that our Lord died; who it is that was once crowned with thorns, dragged to that tree of death, spit upon and scourged and crucified. "Behold the man," said Pontius Pilate; *it was the man Christ; He Himself said*

of Himself, "the Son of man goeth as it is written of Him." But hear also the centurion, "Truly, this was the Son of God;" hear St. Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;" hear, above all, Christ Himself, when the chief priest asked Him, "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed?" He answered, "I am;" and those earlier sayings of His, "before Abraham was, I am;" "I came down from heaven." It was He of whom St. Paul the Apostle says, that, "being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God," and yet, that He "took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." The form of God was His own from everlasting; the form of a man was that which He took up at a certain time, and which then became His own too. And thus we have a great mystery; Christ is our mystery, being both God and man.

But the mystery deepens when we think of God the Son, of One who "was God," suffering. We are used to see men suffer; human sufferings are easily understood; and if our Lord had, if we may so speak, laid aside His Godhead, and suffered only as a man, then we might have more easily entered into the scene of the Cross;

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but we come to an awful and amazing truth, that He who suffered the spitting, the scourges, the sharpness of the thorns, the nails in His flesh, the agony of a most painful and shameful death, was God as well as man, very God of very God; the Godhead veiled indeed and hidden, as it were, within the flesh, clouded over, yet still suffering, taking part in the suffering of the Cross; the two natures, the human and the divine, being so united that what the one endured penetrated the other.

Look then, my friends, to the Cross, and try as far as poor weak souls can do, to put before your minds, not only a suffering man, with His pierced and bleeding flesh, but the presence of Him who upholdeth all things by the word of His power, and had come down from His throne of glory in heaven. Surely, when our spirit in any earnest way considers who it was that hung upon the Cross, it grows almost giddy and overwhelmed with so very awful, so very marvellous a spectacle.

And when we begin to ask ourselves *why* it was, for what end such a mystery was ever manifested in the world as the dying of One who was indeed God, we can scarcely tell whether we are *most* overpowered by the dreadful sinfulness

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of sin, the blackness and accursedness of sin, or the unspeakable love of Him who consented to tread that most mysterious and most bitter way of death. O how utterly hateful, how utterly intolerable, how desperately guilty must sin be, that sin in which we were all conceived and born, which brought the Lord of glory from His glory, from the height of His divine Majesty, from that exceeding height to the degradation of the Cross, to the death of murderers and thieves ! What a descent was that from such unspeakable honour to such unspeakable shame ; the very earth shook and was covered with blackness, the sun was darkened, when this sinful world beheld the eternal Son of God in all the agonies of death, the Prince of life put to death by the creatures whom He had made. O how unsearchable and countless the riches of that love which “despised not the shame,” which refused not to add the nature of man to His own nature as God, to suffer as a man, that He might redeem us from hell and death by His own death, all the vials of God’s wrath being then poured upon our Saviour’s head, His head being alone equal to bear the terrors of the divine vengeance, and in one death to suffer all men’s deaths.

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We cannot, indeed, in any way understand the value of that death of the Son of God without looking far beyond the world. We may look round us upon the earth from which the Cross has long since been removed, and we shall not see the use or the gain of the Cross. And hence it is, that unless men have a lively far-seeing faith to transport them out of the world, they care so little about the Cross. Whether our Saviour died or not is all one, at present, to those who are busied in the world, whose treasure is here and here their affections, here their heart, here their objects of interest. But, my friends, try to give time wings; suppose the tale told, the sand run out, the other world really come, the valley of the shadow of death passed, your souls added to the souls of the departed, this whole scene around us, our homes, fields, employments, all left behind us and passed like the forms and figures of a dream; suppose ourselves, I say, in the very presence of our God; then think what would it be to have no Saviour's blood whereunto to look, no sufficient sacrifice for our sins, but all our sins standing round us, with none to cover them, none to silence or keep them down, none to drown them or wash them out. Imagine all our evil thoughts, all our evil words, all our

evil deeds, that great multitude of offences, all to be answered for and punished. Would not our souls be stunned and agonized by the consciousness of our guilt?

Look beyond the world, I repeat, to the judgment seat, to the throne of God; see by the eye of faith what it is to be lost, what it is to be saved; gaze down the pit of hell and through the golden doors of heaven; then we shall in some sort know what it is to have a Saviour or to have Him not; then shall we understand in some sort the exceeding value of the Cross, and the desperateness of our condition, had there been no mercy-seat in heaven raised by Christ to fly to, but only the seat of strict and terrible judgment; no merciful Saviour, but only a most just and angry Judge. When we shut up our thoughts within the world, and busy ourselves only in worldly things, and force from our contemplation all such truths as the coming judgment, heaven, hell, eternal bliss, eternal wrath, of course it will be but a light matter that our Lord has suffered; it will not penetrate us, nor pierce deeply into the soul, nor have any hold upon us. Christ's work was not for this world; *His kingdom is not of this world*; His sufferings save us not from present suffering. We may do

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without the Cross while we are here ; we may have no great loss on earth for being out of His favour ; we cannot see Him ; He may be grieved or fixing on us fearful looks of wrath, but we may go on for a time enjoying and caring for the world. “What is that to us,” we may say. But will not a time come when we shall yearn for the least and faintest glance of love ? Is not a day coming when all will be lost who have not trusted in the Cross of Jesus Christ, and all perish who have not clung to Him for the salvation of their souls ? When the world is past, the true believers will feel that the Cross is a tree of life ; and woe to the unbelieving who have trodden under foot the Son of God, or have had no more than the empty lamp of mere profession in their hands.

We shall all look on Him whom they pierced. His crucifixion is long since past, but its fruit has yet to be reaped ; every one of us will stand before that Holy One, who long since gave up the ghost upon the Cross. We shall know Him in an instant, though we have never seen Him yet ; we shall need no messenger to go before us and tell us then, “Behold the man ;” the glory of His Godhead will at once reveal to us who He is ; and then, when we see the brightness

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of His face, we shall only wonder the more at His condescension and His love in having tasted death for every man.

Look beyond the world, I say again, to that hour, and then we shall know the blessed fruit of His death, and they that have trusted in Him will feel that in His countenance is life, in His look of love pardon of all sins. We have no hope of eternal life, of being able to bear the judgment except through His death. And hence it is that St. Paul seems for the moment to have lost all other truths of the Gospel, when he says, "I determined not to know any thing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified;" and again he says, "God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of Jesus Christ." Our only hope of glory flows from the Cross of Christ.

And yet is not this our glory our shame? Does not our very hope suggest to us bitter thoughts of shame? Should we not as it were hide our faces and humble ourselves to the dust when we consider that we have caused the sufferings and death of the Son of God, that none of us are free from the guilt of that blood, nay, that if we are free, we are without hope of pardon, if we have no share in it we have no share in the atonement which it wrought? Thus

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hope and shame mix together in the Christian's thoughts of the Passion. We at once rejoice that Christ has suffered, and are filled with shame that we brought Him to prison and to death; we glory in the healing virtue of the Cross; we are abashed at the remembrance of all those agonies of our Lord which our sins brought upon Him out of His love; we shudder at the blasphemy of the Jews in putting our Lord to death, and yet we scarce dare to think of the fearful condition of the world if they had not crucified Him; we feel also that *we* killed Him; they were but the executioners; the whole world in some sort sentenced Him to death; or rather, God the Father allowed Him to bear our sentence, to transfer our condemnation to Himself; we had part in that blood; we cannot wash our hands and say, "we are innocent of the blood of that just Person."

And this is a very fearful thought if we fix the blood of Christ upon ourselves, if we say to our souls, "I have been like Cain, a shedder of blood," though His blood "speaketh better things than that of Abel." And yet it is a wholesome, though a fearful thought; for while we continually put the Cross before our minds as our source of hope and life, it may move us to

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exclaim with David, "my sin is ever before me." There is no making light of sin when the best of us has to confess that he has so sinned as to cause blood to be shed, so sinned that by no lesser sacrifice could the forgiveness of God be obtained. We may often think we have done nothing greatly amiss ; we may see others worse than ourselves ; we may be little afflicted or oppressed with the weight of sin ; we may think, especially if we have led what the world calls a decent life, that many expressions of sinfulness put into our mouth by Scripture or by the Church, are somewhat exaggerated and overstrained and hardly applicable to our case. We may be easy and composed, and just allow in an easy way that we are sinners, without any burning shame in our hearts ; and we may think thieves and murderers, and drunkards and adulterers, and such like persons alone have need to be troubled, abashed, struck to the ground with the sense of sin. But if we solemnly face this truth, that the least of sinners, the best of men, is so utterly lost, so worthy of death, so condemned by the wrath of God that the fire of hell must have been his portion unless Christ's blood had been shed for him, we may take a deeper view of our exceeding sinfulness. Let us

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but think that we have actually by our sins, whatever they are, however lightly we may consider them ourselves, had a hand in the awful death and sufferings of the Son of God, then we may be moved to bow our head to the earth, and to behold the blackness of our guilt ; then we may feel that there is no confession of sin which is too strong even for the best.

And there is this further use in thus meditating on the sufferings of Christ, that it not only tends to work in us a true godly sorrow for past sins, but to remind us that we have a continual crucifixion to go through, a continual dying to sin, a continual service to this dear Lord. What more affecting argument can we have to draw us from further sin than the thought of grieving Him who underwent the death of the Cross? Once we have had a hand in crucifying Him ; but what if we were to crucify Him afresh, to make His first sacrifice of no effect, to undo His work of ineffable love by continued ungodliness and fresh violations of His Holy Law ! Surely it must put this our Saviour to grief, if after He has done as much as to lay down His life for our lives, we do that which He hates, and neglect to do what He loves. Ill return would this be for a Redeemer's love.

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May our conscience cause us to start when we see
sin; may the form of our bleeding Lord rise
before our mind; may we seem to see Him
dying on the Cross, and may the remembrance
of that Cross by the aid of divine grace drive
away from us all thoughts of sin, that we may
glorify God with our flesh and with our spirit
which are God's.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

WHO SHOULD BE SPONSORS?

A LAW of our Church says that no person shall be admitted godfather or godmother to any child, before the said person, so undertaking, hath received the Holy Communion.

Why is this so? Why has the Church so ordained? For the best of reasons. Because those persons who slight their Lord's dying command, and will not receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, cannot be proper persons to see that a child shall be instructed in its duty to God. They do not fulfil their own baptismal vow, and therefore cannot, in common reason, be in a fit state of mind to see that a child be taught to fulfil his. It would be a sort of mockery for such a sponsor to say to a child, "do this," when he did not do it himself. The child himself would soon see that such advice could not be sincere, and would be more inclined to do as his sponsor *did*, than to do as he *said*. But is it so? How is it then, parents, that you have not been

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willing to hear the Church? Why have you not taken care to look out for communicants to stand sponsors to your children?

Is it indeed so? How is it then, communicants, that you have not more frequently become sponsors? Which are to blame? You or the parents? Or are there faults on both sides? I dare say this is the case. There are faults on both sides. It seldom happens that one party is altogether in the wrong. Blame generally attaches in some degree to both. Parents may not have looked out for communicants, or communicants may not have been willing to stand. But is this likely to be the case? Is it possible that communicants should refuse to stand? I fear this is too often true.

Let me then speak a word to communicants. Do you know what you profess, my friends, when you partake of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's body and blood? You profess your desire to be one with Christ, and to have Him one with you, as is the case with a faithful receiver. You desire to have fellowship with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Consider, then, how you can be a partaker of *this* communion and fellowship if you refuse to become sponsors for a little child. Jesus Christ

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loved little children, and laid His hands on them and blessed them. The Father sent His Son to die for them. The Holy Spirit is ready to sanctify them and make them vessels meet for their Master's use. And you have little care for them ! What fellowship, then, can you have with the Holy Three in One ? You have partaken, indeed, of the outward sign in the Lord's Supper, but have you really received the inward and spiritual grace ? You cannot have been faithful partakers, and therefore cannot have received it, else you would love the little children as your Saviour did, and be anxious to do all you could for their salvation. And the very circumstance that the parents of children are careless people, would make you more anxious, like your Saviour, to seek and save that which was lost ; to do what you could for the poor neglected child.

It might not be pleasant, indeed, in a worldly sense to have to do with careless parents. But you would not look upon it in a worldly sense, you would have a higher motive : you would consider that it was denying yourself for Christ. You would do it under the hope that your Saviour would bless the act done for His sake ; bless it for the eternal good of the poor child's soul. *That would be all your desire, and though*

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you sought no reward, great would be your reward in heaven.

Communicants, how you can reconcile it to your consciences not to become sponsors more frequently, I cannot understand. How you can think that you are fulfilling the law of Christ, when you are not so bearing one another's burdens, is past my comprehension ! You see a poor child likely to be neglected and in danger of losing his soul, and you will not come forward and do your best that he may be saved. Or, you are asked by parents to become sponsors, and you refuse, and so force the parents, as it were, to choose sponsors they would not otherwise have chosen. My friends, may God in His mercy dispose you to think differently, to have more regard for your own souls than to hold back or refuse. O, I beseech you, be the friends of little children ; succour their souls ; teach them their Saviour's will ; and as you hope for salvation yourself, so be merciful to the little ones, that they also may be saved in Christ's fold.

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

"TOO LATE."

"How are you all to-day, Mrs. Martin," asked the rector of Beechcroft as he entered the lowly dwelling of the aged widow whom he addressed; "I mean your poor son-in-law, and his motherless children?"

"Thank you, Sir, they are pretty well, but he takes on sadly about her, and frets as if his heart would break. It is sad, Sir, to see them, poor bairns, and no mother to look after them, and all so young."

"We look only to the present time, my good friend, and cannot tell why it has pleased God to afflict you thus deeply, and to take away one whom He Himself gave as the natural protector of her helpless little ones; but let us not doubt that it is for some wise reason and for her good that He has removed her from this world, we will hope to one free from pain and sorrow, poverty and affliction."

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"Yes, Sir, I try to think of this, and tell John he must put his trust in God, who will not leave him comfortless; but then, Sir, you see it has all come so suddenly, he can hardly think of any thing yet."

"Her illness was, indeed, a very short one, and only verifies more strongly to us the words of the Burial Service, 'In the midst of life we are in death.' A few short hours, and she who was one of the most active among us, lay numbered with the dead."

"Yes, Sir, it was very awful; I am sure I shall never forget seeing her all in flames, and screaming out for help; and then, so soon after, all was over, my poor child was gone."

"Could you tell me, Mrs. Martin, if it is not too painful, how it happened, for I was from home at the time; I had gone to see my brother who is ill, and did not return till a few hours after her death, and I have not heard any particulars yet."

"Why, Sir," replied Mrs. Martin, "she was busy washing, and all the children except the baby were gone to school, and it was asleep in the cradle. The fire-place in their house is very awkward, and the bars very forward, and she was passing quickly by with a lot of dirty things,

and somehow her gown took fire, and she was all in a blaze in a moment. The back door was open, and just then the front as well, and as the wind was pretty strong, there was such a draught and the flames burnt so quickly, that before the neighbours had time to run in, (they heard her scream,) she was so badly burnt, that Mr. Morgan said, as soon as he saw her, she could not get over it."

"But she lived some hours, did she not?"

"Yes, Sir, she continued through that day and night, and after Mr. Morgan put on the cotton wool, she seemed tolerably easy, and could tell us how it happened."

"And was she sensible of her danger?"

"Yes, Sir, quite, and she prayed so earnestly for forgiveness, and for her poor husband and children. But there was one thing which pressed upon her mind more than any thing else, and well it might, for it is a very serious thing. It was, Sir, that she had never taken the Sacrament. And many and many a time when I have talked to her about it, she has always told me that she would by and by, when her family grew up, and she had less to do for them. And then when this befel her, she wished very much that she had attended to her duty in this respect."

better, and many many times she repeated ‘too late, too late.’”

“How sad but too true; yes, indeed, it was then *too late* to repair the omissions of many previous years, and how many there are in the parish who are entirely forgetting the last injunction of the dying Saviour. The young, with very few exceptions, seem to think that the duty does not belong to them, and that a few years hence will be quite time enough for them to think seriously; the middle-aged are too intent upon the cares and businesses and anxieties of life, while the aged would fain delay as long as possible pledging themselves, as they call it, to live holy lives, for it is the only redeeming point in their conduct, that they do think it a very serious thing to communicate, and fear they shall not ‘live up to it afterwards.’”

“Yes, Sir, that is what they all say, but I think they must know very little about its real meaning, or they would talk differently about it.”

“Do you remember old Widow Gray in the almshouse, Mrs. Martin? she had, as one may say, one foot in the grave for a long time before she died, but she could not be brought to desire the Holy Communion when she was tolerably well, and at the last her illness was very short,

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and she was chiefly insensible, so that she died without partaking of the ‘Bread of Life.’ Mary Linton, too, of the Green, she was far from being an elderly person, but of a very delicate constitution, her illness terminated more suddenly than any of us were prepared for, and she has to account for her entire disregard of her Christian privileges.”

“And when will those who survive take warning, if not by such fearful examples as these; for truly, and you cannot, even as her mother, conceal it from yourself, how awful is the state of the soul rendering an account at the judgment-seat for wilful acts of disobedience, and despising of holy privileges!

“We, as ministers, are bound to bid our people to this heavenly feast from the altar, and from the pulpit we exhort them to come, and to consider how little the ‘feigned excuses’ with which they satisfy their own consciences now, will avail for their neglect when pleaded before their Almighty Judge. And by private remonstrance, too, we endeavour to remove the hindrances to a worthy Communion which deter many sincere worshippers from approaching the Lord’s table, but with how little success is unhappily shewn in the numbers who depart, com-

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pared with those who remain to accept the Saviour's invitation."

"And yet, Sir, pardon me for interrupting you, I believe there are very few of those who go to Church who never mean to receive it; they do mean to do it, once at least before they die."

"Yes, Mrs. Martin, so I often hear, but are not these adding presumption to their other offences? they mean to communicate, and live to God, but when? When life, like a flickering candle, is just expiring, and their race is run? When they think that having brought up their families they have no prospect of a much longer continuance here, and choose to turn at the eleventh hour to Him who has supported and blessed them through the heat and burden of the day of life? Surely for such who knew their plain duty, and wilfully put it aside, it is very presumptuous to expect to be favourably received when they think fit to approach the holy Sacrament?"

"Equally so is it for them to calculate, as they must do, upon living so long as they look forward to. Who knows the day of his death, or the manner of it? This in mercy has been concealed from us; but do not too many make the very

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uncertainty an occasion for sin, like the rich man in the parable, who would increase his worldly riches but not his treasures in heaven."

"What you say is very true, Sir, and I wish indeed that all who neglect this holy Sacrament could hear you, and if they would but think of my poor Mary, they would surely be afraid of continuing longer in disobedience."

"I must now say good bye for the present, Mrs. Martin," replied Mr. Thorp. "May the divine blessing rest upon and comfort you and yours in this hour of trial."

After leaving Mrs. Martin, the rector proceeded to the house of another parishioner, whom he wished to lead to take warning by the fearful tale I have just related, of the danger of neglecting till too late obedience to the divine command, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

Mary Barton was regular in her attendance at Church, at least she seldom was missed from her place in the afternoon, but hardly ever was she there during the Morning Service. Being a labouring man's wife she certainly had had duties to perform to her husband and family, which must often have been a hindrance to her by detaining her at home, but when she had these hindrances no longer, she still was only at

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Church once a day, and had never partaken of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

"Well, Mary," said Mr. Thorp, "here we have winter again, and very sharp it is this evening. I am glad to see you have such a good fire; how much we should feel for the poor people in countries where coal is scarce, and very dear, as it is in many parts of this country."

"Yes, Sir, we should indeed, we have them very moderate here, and not far to fetch; but pray, Sir, walk in a bit and warm yourself."

"Thank you, Mary, I will, for I have a word to say to you this evening, and I am glad to have found you at home. How quickly the evenings close in now, but no wonder, we are not far from the shortest day, the 21st of December. We are soon now to commemorate a very holy season, and one of peculiar joy and thanksgiving."

"You mean Christmas, Sir; yes, it is very near now."

"True, Mary, the season of Advent, which our Church has set apart to prepare us not only for the commemoration of Christ's first coming in the flesh, but for His second Advent to judge the world, will soon be ended, and happy will it be for us, if we have improved it as we ought.

"And this has led me to what I wanted to

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say to you. You know that on Sunday week, being the last Sunday before Christmas day, I shall, God willing, give notice that the Holy Communion will be administered on the Festival of the Nativity, or Christmas day, to all who are ‘religiously and devoutly disposed.’ Let me then ask you, shall you be one of those who will hear this invitation to the Heavenly Feast, or do you decide that it does not concern you, that you are never at Church in a morning, and that therefore you need think no more about it?”

“Why, Sir, you see I never could get to Church in a morning, but I am sure I have never missed in an afternoon when the weather has been any ways fit for me to go.”

“I know, Mary, that you have had hindrances, but as your children are grown up, and you have only your husband to do for, I must tell you that you are your own hinderer now.”

“Well, Sir, I do intend to go to Church oftener, and in a morning too, but as to the Sacrament, I dare not think of that yet.”

“Why not, Mary? the command to receive it is addressed to *each* and *all* of us.”

“Yes, Sir, that is true, but I do not think I am fit to receive it yet. You see, Sir, one has many things to try one, and to take the Sacra-

ment and sin afterwards, is a very serious thing."

"Let me ask you one thing, Mary; if you continue in this mind till your last illness comes, and while on your death-bed, when you feel your time is short, you wish to partake of the Lord's Supper, do you think that doing it then will make up for your past neglects and wilful disobedience?"

"I know, Sir, I ought to repent, and turn from my sins before then, for who knows if the Lord will give him time at the last, but"—

"But you are unwilling to examine your life and conversation by the rule of God's holy Word, and to repent of those sins which you know you have committed, which is what is required of every Communicant. Why then do you go to Church? As a custom only, or really to confess your sins, and pray for forgiveness? because if you do this, and never intend or wish to do better, you are only mocking God by your worship in His House of Prayer."

"I hope, Sir, I say my prayers in Church, and listen to the sermon."

"I trust you do, but I was going to say *that* if you really *meant* what you prayed, why should you not receive the Sacrament of the

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Lord's Supper after joining in the public worship of the Church? You know what our Catechism teaches us is required of those who come to the Lord's Table?"

"Yes, Sir, they must examine themselves."

"Well, what about? I will tell you; they must see whether they repent truly of their sins past, stedfastly purpose to lead a new life; they must ask themselves if they have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ with a thankful remembrance of His death, and be in charity with all men. Now what is there here which is not required of every Christian, in whatever state of life he may be placed, whether he partake of the Holy Communion or not?"

"Yes, Sir, these things are very true, but taking the Sacrament binds you so solemnly to a holy life."

"Let me ask you another question, Mary; you were sponsor, I think, last Sunday afternoon for Mrs. Johnson's little girl, now tell me what you promised in her name, till she is old enough to answer for herself?"

"Why, Sir, I answered those questions you read to us."

"Yes, Mary, you did, and those questions were,
'Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his works,

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the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?' to which you replied, 'I renounce them all.' You likewise declared your belief in all the Articles of the Creed which I repeated to you, and promised obedience during your whole life to God's holy will and commandments. All this you did on Sunday last in the name of the child then admitted into covenant with God in Holy Baptism; but my reason for mentioning this is, because I wish to remind you of *your own* Baptism, wherein you made the very same promise and profession which you did on Sunday last in the name of that child. And yet you talk of *new vows*, as if you were quite at liberty to behave as you think fit, and had *never before* made a solemn promise of obedience to God's holy will and commandments."

"I never thought of that, Sir; yes, I did promise that when I was confirmed, but I am afraid I have not often remembered it since."

"The vows and promises of Baptism are indeed sadly overlooked, but you see that there is nothing to which a Communicant is bound, either *as to strictness of life or watchfulness of words, or controlling of tempers, or ruling of appetite,*

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or charity to neighbours, which a baptized Christian has not *equally* bound himself to observe and do, and that in receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, he enters into no new obligations. You are looking forward, I am sure, Mary, to a happy eternity, and yet you will persist in neglecting one of the very means of grace offered, yes, freely offered, to you. Our Catechism says that Baptism *and* the Lord's Supper are generally *necessary to salvation*. You would not dare to hope that any one who wilfully refuses Baptism could be saved, why then do you think differently about the Lord's Supper? You put it off month after month, and year after year, and who knows whether, having slighted so many opportunities, one will be granted you at the last. Your late neighbour's sudden death should surely be a warning to you to repent before it be *too late*.”

“How awful it was, Sir, that she should be taken away so quickly, she had never been to the Sacrament had she, Sir?”

“No, Mary, like yourself, she attended Church, and often heard the invitation to come to the Saviour's Table, but heedless of it in life, her cry in death was ‘too late, too late.’ May her fate warn you, that you bring not upon yourself the wrath and judgment of God for your ingratitude

"TOO LATE."

and disobedience. Now I must leave you, but pray think over what I have said, and remember that to be happy when you die, you must live a holy life now, and that that is not a holy life, which is passed in disobedience to the plain command of Him who said,

"Do this in remembrance of Me."

**AN EXHORTATION TO THE HOLY COMMUNION,
(FROM THE PRAYER-BOOK.)**

"YE know how grievous and unkind a thing it is, when a man hath prepared a rich feast, decked his table with all kind of provision, so that there lacketh nothing but the guests to sit down ; and yet they who are called, without any cause, most unthankfully refuse to come. Which of you in such a case would not be moved ? Who would not think a great injury and wrong done unto him ? Wherefore, most dearly beloved in

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Christ, take ye good heed, lest ye, withdrawing yourselves from this holy Supper, provoke God's indignation against you. It is an easy matter for a man to say, I will not communicate, because I am otherwise hindered by worldly business. But such excuses are not so easily accepted and allowed before God. If any man say, I am a grievous sinner, and therefore am afraid to come, wherefore do ye not repent and amend? When God calleth you, are ye not ashamed to say ye will not come? When ye should return to God, will ye excuse yourselves, and say ye are not ready? Consider earnestly how little such feigned excuses will avail before God. They that refused the feast in the Gospel, because they had bought a farm, or would try their yokes of oxen, or because they were married, were not so excused, but counted unworthy of the heavenly feast I bid you, in the name of God, I call you in Christ's behalf, I exhort you, as ye love your own salvation, that ye will be partakers of this Holy Communion. And as the Son of God did vouchsafe to yield up His soul unto death, upon the cross, so it is your duty to receive the Communion in remembrance of the sacrifice of His death as He Himself hath commanded, which if ye shall neglect to do, consider how great an





"TOO LATE."

injury ye do unto God and how sore a punishment
hangeth over your heads for the same, when ye
wilfully abstain from the Lord's table, and sepa-
rate from your brethren who come to feed on the
banquet of that most heavenly food."

JOHN HENRY PARKER, OXFORD AND LONDON.

